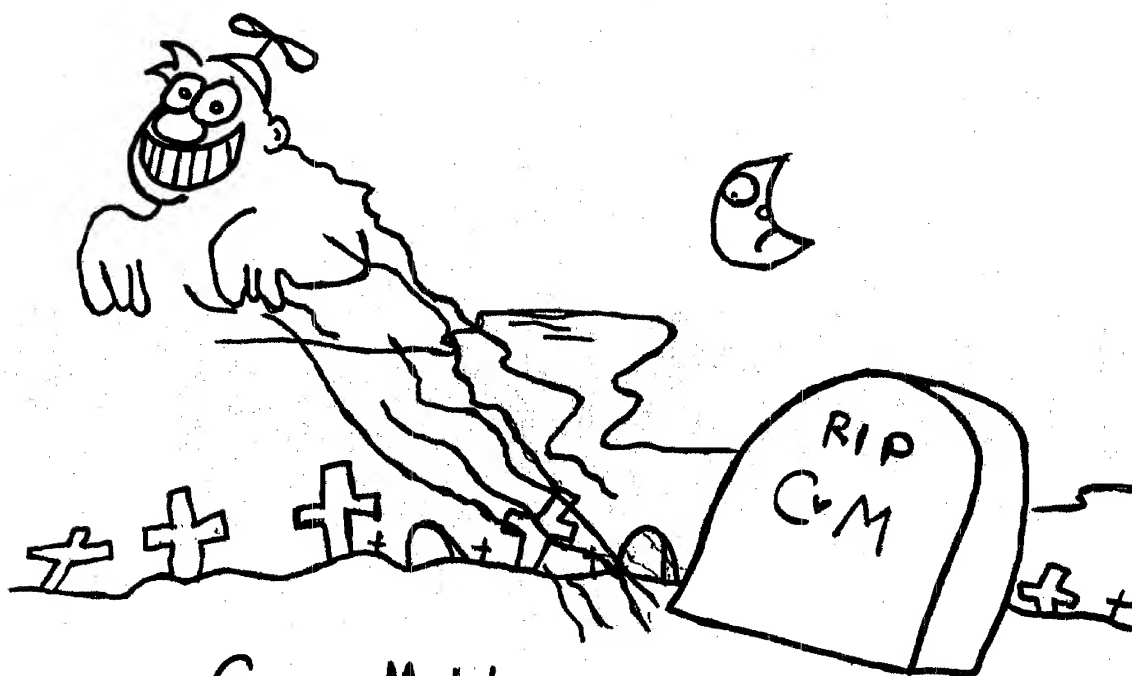


DIPLOMACY WORLD



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ISSUE 19

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DIPLOMACY WORLD

DIPLOMACY WORLD is a quarterly magazine of information and comment on the commercial simulation game Diplomacy (R)*. The editorial offices are at P.O. Box 626, San Diego, CA 92112, USA. Unsolicited manuscripts are welcomed if typed, double-spaced on one side and accompanied by return postage.

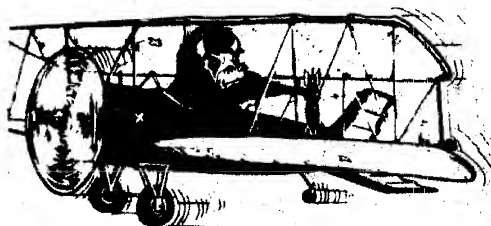
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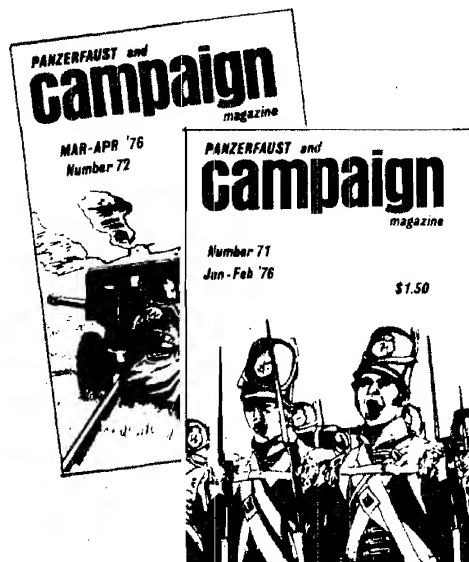
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THE NOVICE CORNER

If this magazine is to have a regular Novice Information Column, it seems appropriate to start at the very beginning - which I did not do last issue, but then there was a crying need at that point. Let's spend this issue looking at a few basic (and admittedly vague) questions: What is a novice? When does one cease to be one? Are postal and face-to-face novices different from one another? And, while we're about it, what are the essential differences between postal Diplomacy and in-person Diplomacy?

A novice - well, you can look in Webster's just as well as I can. The term is bandied about the Diplomacy hobby to mean a beginner to the game, and/or a beginner to all the peripheral hobby business that goes on. I know of people who, by virtue of some special talent or parallel experiences, cease to be novices the minute they discover that Diplomacy exists. I know others who are still novices after ten years.

The dividing line, to me, is that a novice (beginner) is one who as yet has no instinctive reactions in terms of this game. If the opposite of novice is veteran, then a veteran is one who operates effectively first and only later, if he bothers to consider the point at all, consciously recognizes why.

Two examples. You are given Italy to play, and the time is now to begin negotiating. Whom do you negotiate with? The novice will probably give you one of two answers (or maybe both): "Everybody" and/or "France and Austria, then maybe Turkey." The advanced novice (or budding veteran) will smile and answer, "Everybody if possible, with particular emphasis on Austria, France and Turkey." The real veteran will give you an answer that is rather similar. BUT WHAT WILL THESE PEOPLE ACTUALLY HAVE DONE? The novice will have leapt from the table yelling, "Austria, c'mere, I wanna talk to you - Hey France, you're next, don't run off." The advanced novice will have pondered the board a moment, glanced round surreptitiously, and arranged to (slyly, he thinks) buttonhole Austria and France, later Turkey. The real veteran will simply sit at the table for a while, then stand up and wander around without apparent purpose - he's thinking. You may not notice him doing too much, in fact; a few chats here, a little pointing and gesturing there, but by the time the moves are read he will have talked to all six opponents, in some depth, and he will not have specially emphasized Austria and France and maybe Turkey. The talks with Russia and Germany - and, yes, even England - will have been meaty, with long-term possibilities and various plans analyzed and given some priority. The same applies in postal play.

It is perfectly true that in 1901 and 1902, England, Germany and Russia cannot do you much harm. The veteran is not really thinking of this, because he does not even give one second's consideration to the possibility of being attacked and eliminated immediately. He worries more about later in the game - 1904, say - when one or two countries are nearly gone and firm alliances and patterns are showing up. He cares about England in 1901 because he may have to care in 1905.

Does this seem nebulous? Try this one. You are England. Your plan at the moment is to stab your ally, Germany, and move into his centers. You have Fleet North Sea; Germany has Army Kiel; Germany owns Holland and Denmark. No other relevant units are involved. It is a fall turn coming, Germany cannot get a build no matter what he does, and you either don't need one or are getting one somewhere else. What is your move to stab Germany - Denmark or Holland?

Novices will be split in their replies; it's not the answer that matters here, it's the reasoning. A lot of people are going to say, "Hey, wait a minute, that bit about 'no other relevant units' is hogwash, I have to know what the total board situation is." Some people will say, "Depends on your ally. If it's Russia, try for Holland because Russia will be barreling through Scandinavia anyway. If it's France, go for Denmark. If it's Austria, flip a coin - both those centers will be yours anyway." Then there'll be the analytical types who will weigh both options and (more often than not) will select Holland as the best bet because, if you win, you have more leverage on more neighboring provinces. Some will say try Denmark, because Germany will reason the same way I just did when offering Holland. Some will point out that a fleet in Holland gives no more leverage in Holland than it does in Denmark; now, if it were an army.... and so on.

Have you followed all this? I hope so, because then you'll have kittens when I inform you that the veteran would move his fleet to the Helgoland Bight.

Why? Re-read all the givens above. Germany cannot be getting a build. No other relevant units are involved, which means mainly that Germany has most of his pieces off elsewhere. You don't need the build right now, meaning speed is not essential. Why play for mere 50-50 odds when, once in Helgoland, you can put leverage on three centers - and in addition, Germany will almost certainly have tried to outguess you and have moved either to Holland or Denmark; if so, you will be absolutely guaranteed the other one next move. (The trick part of this quiz was the statement that it was a fall move; if I'd said spring move, novices would often get the

same answer I did.) Veterans, because they have learned and experienced and been there, know the answer. Or can figure it out.

Now do you know what a novice is? If not, you probably still are one.

So the next big question is, so what? Does it matter? And if so, does it matter more postally or in-person?

Of course it matters. And don't be misled here; being a veteran does not necessarily mean winning games; veterans lose a lot too. "Veteran" is decidedly not synonymous with "good player." Beyond that, it matters because you simply must not expect too much, or be put off when someone does something you'd never even thought of, or accomplishes a result that you never even knew was likely. Playing good Diplomacy is like playing the piano, only (thank God) easier; it takes time to get to the top. It matters mainly because most people assume that the differentiating stage between novice and veteran is when you finally master all the rules, or win your first couple of games without accident, or simply hang in there so long that you couldn't possibly be a novice any more. It is not. It is when you finally start to think like a Diplomacy player, instead of like a player of Diplomacy.

And there's a distinct, if hard-to-define, difference between postal novices and in-person novices too. The result is the same, but the means to that result are slightly askew. It is perfectly true that some people who are superb postal veteran players never succeed in-person, and vice-versa. The issues are pressure and patience.

There are dozens of games of solitaire that one can play with a deck of cards. Some of them give you their result in about thirty seconds; others may take an hour or more. A person with great patience and inner calm will not be appalled at these longer games; a person wanting "instant justice" will often prefer the quickie game. So with Diplomacy. Some players do very well if left alone to mull over possibilities, analyze possible moves and move-patterns, consider advantageous and disadvantageous alliances, read between the lines of opponents' letters looking for subtle snares - maybe even (as in one case I knew) moving the pieces around on the board to see which alliance will give the most appealing aesthetic panorama of colors. Or it may be that you simply work 70 hours a week and can't find the time for an in-person game. Other people work well under pressure, in fact prefer it; they like seeing their opponents in person, having time limits to meet, sorting out sixteen patterns at once in a fast computer mind. Nobody can tell you which you are. You will just have to try both and find out which you prefer, and hopefully why. (There are a

few rare people who succeed in both arenas.)

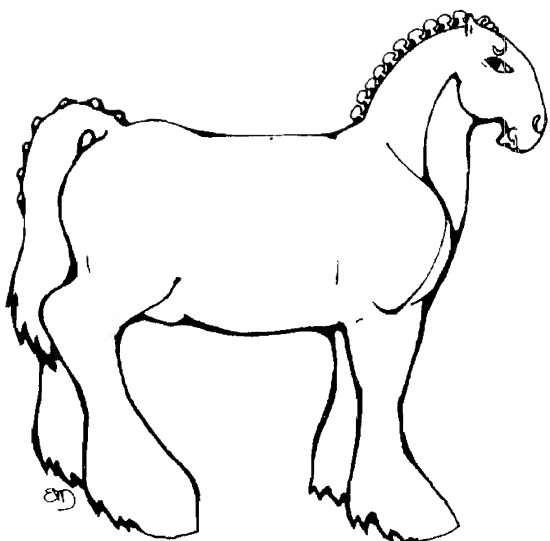
So what has this to do with novices? This: You will cease to be a novice in the theme at hand when you discover, for sure, which type of Diplomacy play is best for you, and why. (Or when you discover that it makes no difference.) In order to succeed in Diplomacy, you must first succeed in knowing yourself, and mainly in knowing yourself as you react to the game situation. That's true of almost anything, isn't it? So - Diplomacy isn't so unusual after all, eh?

"WHAT?!" you're now saying, "Did this whole article devolve to an elementary psychology course?" Yep. It sure did. And why not? After all, there are quite a few things you can do with the game pieces, but the number of really rational possibilities is distinctly finite. However, the number of things you can come up with to do to, and with, the other people in the game is quite infinite, and the sooner each player realizes that Diplomacy is really a game of seven people interacting with one another and not a game of moving little blocks of wood round a map, the better. That's why, if you go back to an earlier part of this article, my discussion of whom you would negotiate with is extremely crucial, whereas the bit about moving to Helgoland Bight is relatively minor. You need to understand both, but the former far more than the latter. And that is, finally, why I have maintained for years, and continue to maintain even into my diplomatic middle-age, that the two most effective and important teaching aids for the game Diplomacy are the rule book and Dale Carnegie's "How to Win Friends and Influence People."

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THE HIGH HORSE

Postal Diplomacy is dead.

It's now been roughly a year since Conrad took over as DIPLOMACY WORLD editor from Walt. In that time, the magazine hasn't changed very drastically; a few personalizing touches here, the slight shift of emphasis there - but in general it's the same old magazine. And circulation has blossomed, principally as a result of encroachments into the world of hobby and game shops; it won't be long before we push over a thousand copies, with no end in sight.

And yet something is wrong.

It seems obvious to me, from my experiences with this magazine and with the letters from the readers, that the difficulty is in assuming that postal Diplomacy, as distinct from in-person Diplomacy, is the wave of the future and the prime source of enjoyment for those who play this game. Exactly the opposite is true. In the days when most new readers of DIPLOMACY WORLD came from word-of-mouth (or word-of-print) recommendations from other readers, or from references in postal fanzines, or from the flyer in the game set (which refers people to DW as a source of information about postal play), this was a valid assumption. But now that the new circulation figures are based largely on sales in local retail stores, a new orientation seems in order.

A certain amount of material that might be expected in these pages applies equally to postal and in-person play, the most obvious example being discussions of tactics and strategy. But a casual look at any recent issue of this magazine will show that roughly half the contents, excluding advertising, consists

in material which (to put it mildly) is of no particular relevance to the person whose exposure to this game is through club or tournament play.

It's an intriguing phenomenon. For years, we of the postal hobby have assumed that play-by-post was the way to keep interest alive with the game; we recognized that finding six others to come together for a personal game was not an easy thing to achieve (our own experiments were influential in this attitude, no doubt), and thus the choice was between very rare games which would often not be brought to conclusion, and play through the mails.

In many cases, there's nothing wrong with this view. Many people cannot play in-person. Some live in isolated areas, far from any hobby club or any real center of population; others simply prefer, for whatever personal reasons, postal play to in-person play. (Maybe they work the night that the local club has its meetings.) But that is hardly true of everybody, and the way the mail has been running lately, it is not true of the majority any more. (There's an irony here; judging from the mails that players do not prefer to play through the mails....)

So DIPLOMACY WORLD must change if these thrilling hobby-store sales are to continue. The postal hobby is not to be abandoned, of course; when I wrote that postal Diplomacy is dead, I meant actually that it has ceased to be the principal facet of a broad hobby; it is now merely another aspect to be taken into account, along with several others of equal or greater importance. The point is that DIPLOMACY WORLD will no longer place its prime emphasis on material that cannot be of relevance to people who cannot, or do not, play by mail. For those who do wish to use envelopes and stamps, there will still be items in these pages of interest. But they won't dominate.

New subjects: Those who have been following Adam Gruen's seven-part tactics series in these pages will be saddened to learn that Mr. Gruen will be unable to complete the final two installments. We have added a new staff member as a sort of replacement - Mark Berch will be providing a regular tactics/strategy column henceforward - but in fact this is not really a replacement at all, since Mark agrees with me that completion of a series so closely tied with its author's personal views is useless. Mark will simply be writing about whatever he wishes.

Other staff problems: The demonstration game analysis had not arrived by press time, so is not included; it will be published next issue if received. Art Editor Liz Danforth is still on leave, but will be back next time.

Finally, the deadline for submissions for next issue will be JULY 1, 1978. Please try to have your contributions in as early as possible, as items arriving after the above date may just not make it in.

SOOPER AUSTRIA

by RICHARD NASH

My initial reaction upon seeing my country as Austria in a lineup is, GROAN. Aside from Italy it is the only country I dislike playing due to the limitation of scope available. A look at the top six countries will show why, with England (surprisingly) sharing bottom place with it on the victory ratings. ((In the U.K.)) Assuming that all players of the other countries are equally strong, it isn't difficult to see why.

Austria occupies the most sensitive and easily accessible area on the board, surrounded by three or four potential enemies from the outset. The only possible gains are Serbia and Greece, after which it is almost impossible to get anywhere without exposing one flank or the other. In one of my games, for example I was stuck at 5 units for five years before being put out.

With this in mind, what is the best policy? Ignoring Germany as a potential threat in the early stages, how about Italy? While any competent Italian player should reject any Austrian advances totally, the chances of this happening are not prohibitive. So - an alliance, or just non-aggression? The latter is the more favorable course. An alliance with Italy is pointless, as both sides tend to get in the way. The best policy is for Italy to go for France, and you to ally with one of the other two Balkan powers against the remaining one.

Thus, assuming you have your non-aggression pact, what power do you ally with? Russia? Consider what happens here. By allying with Russia you allow him to divert Moscow north, giving him strength and two builds early on. While you get Serbia and Greece in 1901, he gets Rumania; where do you go from there? Once Turkey is split up (Bulgaria and Constantinople to you, Smyrna and Ankara to Russia), the only place Russia can get quick units is the Balkans - for by then one of the western powers will be strong enough to keep him away from that direction. So a Russian alliance is pointless in the long term, and any decent Russian player will stab Austria once Turkey has been reduced to two units. By this stage the likelihood of a Russian-Italian pact is about 100% since the latter will have discovered the futility of moving against France.

Therefore that leaves Turkey, and here prospects are much larger than before. Once you get

support into Rumania and in return support Turkey into Sevastopol, the alliance is well on its way. Turkey can go north, while you head east, breaking your non-aggression pact. What could be simpler? Nothing, except any good Turkish player will have allied with England, pointing out the benefits of non-aggression with France while taking Russia apart up north. Turkey gives England support into Moscow, and you lose Warsaw and Rumania in a stab as Italy, forced to retreat by the French menace, moves in on your rear.

Hence you see the dilemma. Then just what is the best Austrian strategy? In my opinion it is getting non-aggression with Italy, allying with Turkey to remove Russia and then stabbing Turkey only if England moves north - in 1902/3 if possible. The best opening moves are F Tri-Alb, A Bud-Ser, and A Vie-Tri. If both Italy and Russia have stabbed (by moving to Tyrolia and Galicia), that's too bad, but in general these moves give about a 70% chance of survival. They also prevent an Italian stab.

In the build season, always build armies - never fleets until either Russia or Turkey is on the way out. A fleet can only be used against Italy, taking too long to get round to Turkey.

Naturally, the position changes depending upon who is playing the other countries. But, if you have six other unknown, competent, logical players on a board, then the above strategy is the one to follow.

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THE DIPLOMACY TOURNAMENT:

A SHOCKING PROPOSAL
by ROD WALKER

I am going to advocate a new Diplomacy tournament scoring system. If you play in tournaments, this proposal is going to piss you off no end. If adopted, my system will make it impossible for players in tournaments to engage in their favorite tactic of winning the war without ever winning a battle.

DISCLAIMER #1: I play Diplomacy for fun. This is why I never play in any sort of tournament (to date). Tournament play is for blood and I can't be bothered. But, if you play Diplomacy tournament-style, then don't you want every player to do the best he can? I believe we can do more to ensure good play.

Okay, what is good play? That's been variously defined by all kinds of people, some of whom may know what they're talking about. However, once our personal predilections are all hanging out, we have to get back to the basic source: The game's inventor, Allan B. Calhamer.

I refer you now to Allan's classic article, "Objectives Other Than Winning In Diplomacy," which originally appeared in the 1974 IDA Handbook, and since reprinted at least once. This article ought to be required reading for every player in a Diplomacy tournament (and every director of one, too). In it, Allan blows away all the irrelevant stuff laid out in the past interminable arguments about "goals" and "good allies" and "what the victory criterion means," and concentrates on the only relevant issue: Diplomacy as a game.

Diplomacy is basically a game of "King of the Mountain" - or, more appropriately, "Stop the Leader." In serious competition, failure to play that game is failure to play Diplomacy. Allan, and the Rulebook, make abundantly clear that you have three choices, or possible results, in a game:

1. You win.
2. You draw, and share the draw equally with all other survivors.
3. You lose.

These choices make it incumbent on every player to try to avoid losing. That means he must try to win, or, at the very least, to deny victory to any other player.

Even so, many players (most, I'll warrant) will traipse along through the game for some lesser, and meaningless, result. The so-called "strong second" players do this. They will opt for what they consider to be a "good showing" and accept second place guaranteed in return

for helping another player win. (We will also get high-falutin' prose from some of them about the "good ally," "honor"...among thieves??... and such.) This, says Allan, short-circuits the very basis of the game:

"...It is easy to believe that a strong second with ten units is preferable to being knocked out early, or succumbing with the rest while holding just one unit. However, in the final battle to prevent the leader from winning, one would normally expect the second-place player to be the leader of the opposition. Consequently, something must be detracted from his achievement because he must bear some of the responsibility for the failure of the final battle."

DISCLAIMER #2: I don't usually play Diplomacy the way Allan feels it should be played. However, we're not talking about your usual casual game, but about a tournament game. There is all the difference between these as between party bridge and duplicate.

There is no question that if players go into the game with a determination to win or draw, only, the result can be exciting. Eventually one of them will be far enough ahead that the others will have to combine to stop him. Allan's description conveys better than any words of mine the high battle that should ensue:

"This final attempt to contain the leader is sometimes one of the most dramatic and exciting parts of the game. Cooperation must be created among the players who have been fighting one another, and who have set their hearts on other objectives; they must admit that goals they have pursued all game long, which are now within their grasp, have just lost their value, and may even be destructive. Frequently they are out of position for the new encounter, better positioned to fight each other. They must form a line together, exposing their territories to each other. This is not the cooperation of being merely assigned to the same team. This is Verdun."

But if somebody wins, then somebody comes in second, and he ought to get credit for that,

SUPERNOVA! is a science fiction gaming magazine printed by Flying Buffalo Inc. It is published irregularly (2 or 3 times a year), offset-printed, booklet format, and the latest issue was 20 pages long. Subscriptions are 5 issues for \$2. Issue #26 had news of s-f games, survey results, notes about STELLAR CONQUEST from the designer, letters, book reviews, STARSHIP COMBAT variants, part of THE MCCONIGLE CHRONICLE, and ads from subscribers. To subscribe, send check or money order to Flying Buffalo Inc, Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252. Sample copy 50¢. We accept MasterCard! (To charge anything sold by Flying Buffalo, send us your MasterCard number and expiration date.)

right? Wrong. Allan addresses himself to that question, and his comment gave me the idea for the tournament rating plan which follows.

"Some players have argued that giving credit for a 'strong second' is realistic. This result is hard to determine, for when a player has won, he has presumably gained control of Europe, something which one country has never done. The strong second, then, is the last or the largest to fall to the conqueror. Whether this situation is a good one to be in or not is hard to say. The Mongols used to give the worst treatment to those of their enemies that held out the longest."

So be it. The Mongols will run our tournament.

The basic terms of scoring in a Diplomacy tournament should be as follows:

1. The winner receives 34 points.
2. If there is a draw, all survivors receive equal shares of the 34 points. The number of points received would be:

7-way:	4.9	points	each	(34.3	total).
6-way:	5.7	"	"	(34.2	"
5-way:	6.8	"	"	(34.0	"
4-way:	8.5	"	"	(34.0	"
3-way:	11.4	"	"	(34.2	"
2-way:	17.0	"	"	(34.0	"

3. Any player eliminated receives zero.
4. If there is a win, every survivor loses 2 points for each center he owns at the end of the game. Negative scores are of course possible. The larger players are in this way more heavily penalized for their failure to stop the leader. Behold the death of "strong second"!

It should be noted that it is virtually impossible to win a tournament without winning at least one game...unless nobody wins one. Agreements between players who are friends and in the same game now become deadly traps, as do trade-off agreements between players who happen to be in more than one game together. Few will find advantage in these heretofore common tournament practices.

Ideally, a Diplomacy tournament run using this scoring system should have three unseeded preliminary rounds, followed by seeded semi-final and final rounds. However, the system should work almost as well if the tournament proceeds entirely on the basis of 3 (or even 2) unseeded rounds, with a final score determined at the end. No player would receive an award if he did not have a final score above zero. (Where there are seeded final rounds, the top two boards would constitute the actual semi-final, and the top board the actual final. Only players at these boards would be eligible for the awards for 1st, 2nd,...nth place.)

Tournaments have to deal with two problems: Deadlines and concessions.

DEADLINES: At least 12 hours should be provided for any one game. Hopefully the director(s) of the tournament would also make

arrangements whereby a game could continue after hours if it were not finished. Ultimately, however, some games will have to be ended before they reach definite results. The players should have not less than 2 hours' notice that their games will be ended at a given time. The season under way when time is called should be completed if it is Fall; otherwise, forget it. When time is called, per the Rulebook, if one player is ahead he is the winner. "Ahead" is defined as follows: A player wins if (a) he has at least 13 units, (b) he is at least 3 units larger than any other player, and (c) there is no stalemate established by any player or alliance.

STALEMATES: A stalemate occurs if the supply center counts for all players do not change for three consecutive game years. A stalemate also occurs if a player establishes a demonstrable line and holds it for three consecutive game years. If a demonstrable stalemate line is being held by any player or alliance at the end of the game's time limit, the game is also stalemated. A stalemated game is a draw.

CONCESSIONS: Concessions in tournaments run under other scoring systems have been common. Even under this system, some players may be inclined to concede victory or draw by vote. There should be no objection to this, so long as the vote is unanimous in either case. Under no circumstances should a less-than-unanimous vote be considered. If a vote is taken, and is unanimous for a conceded victory or draw, the players should be required to sign a statement to that effect. This will prevent everyone concerned from future retractions.

It seems to me that the days in which a Diplomacy tournament can be set up ad hoc and allowed to run itself are about over. A professional approach must be adopted. Specifically:

1. Each game should have an assigned timekeeper who will rigorously enforce the time limits.

2. The timekeeper will also record supply center totals at the end of each game year, oversee any votes for concession, and generally manage the game to ensure that it runs smoothly.

3. All players in the tournament should be assembled at a given advance time for instruction on how the games will be run. The tournament director(s) should make clear in advance that any game beginning after a set deadline time will not count in the tournament. (One exception should be made in the case of a board that is filling at deadline time but does not have 7 players until later.)

4. All rules interpretations and tournament rules must be made available, in writing, to the players in advance.

At a major wargaming convention, there is no excuse for a sloppy Diplomacy tournament. The suggestions just given will make for a more professionally-run affair.

HOOSIER ARCHIVES DEMONSTRATION GAME NO. 7

Spring 1908

AUSTRIA (John Boyer)	A Kie S ENGLISH F Den, A Mun S A Kie, A Pru-Ber, A Sil-War, A Gal-Ukr, A Vie-Gal, A Rum-Sev, A Bud-Rum, A Tri-Ser, A Con H.
ENGLAND (Steve McLendon)	F Nth-Nwg, F Den H, F Iri-Nat, F Eng-Iri, F Lon-Wal, A Bel H.
FRANCE (Bruce Schlickbernd)	F Wal-Eng, F Por-Mid, A Spa-Gas/a/, A Bur S A Spa-Gas.
ITALY (Howard Mahler)	F Mid-Por, A Mar-Bur, A Gas S A Mar-Bur, A Pie-Mar, F Lyo- Spa(sc), F Wes S F Lyo-Spa(sc), F Smy S AUSTRIAN A Con.
RUSSIA (Eric Verheiden)	A Nwy H, A Fin-StP, F Swe-Bot, F Bal S ENGLISH F Den-Kie (nso), A Lvn-War, F Bla-Sev, A Ank S ITALIAN F Smy-Con (nso).

Fall/Winter 1908

AUSTRIA	A Kie S ENGLISH F Den, A Ber S A Kie, A Mun S ITALIAN A Mar-Bur, A Gal-War, A Sil S A Gal-War, A Rum-Sev, A Ukr S A Rum-Sev, A Bud-Rum, A Ser-Bul, A Con S A Ser-Bul. Owns: Bud, Tri, Vie, Bul, Rum, Ser, Ber, Kie, Mun, Con, War, Sev (12). Builds A Bud, A Vie.
ENGLAND	F Nat-Mid, F Iri S FRENCH F Por-Mid (nso), F Wal-Eng, F Nwg-Nth, A Bel H, F Den H. Owns: Edi, Lvp, Lon, Bel, Hol, Den (6). Constant.
FRANCE	F Eng-Bel, A Bur S F Eng-Bel(/r/ Ruh), F Por H. Owns: Par, Por, Fre , Spa (2). Removes F Por.
ITALY	A Gas-Bre, F Spa(sc)-Por, F Mid S F Spa(sc)-Por, F Wes-Spa(sc), A Mar-Bur, A Pie-Mar, F Smy S AUSTRIAN A Con. Owns: Nap, Rom, Ven, Tun, Gre, Smy, Mar, Bre, Spa (9). Builds F Nap, A Ven.
RUSSIA	A StP-Mos, A Lvn S A StP-Mos, A Nwy-StP, F Bal-Pru, F Bot-Bal, A Ank-Con, F Bla S A Ank-Con. Owns: Mos, StP, Nwy, Swe, Ank, Spa , War (5). Removes F Bla, A Ank.

Spring 1909

AUSTRIA	A Kie S A Ber, A Mun S A Kie, A War-Pru, A Ber S A War-Pru, A Sil S A War-Pru, A Vie-Boh, A Bud-Gal, A Ukr-War, A Rum-Ukr, A Sev-Mos, A Bul H, A Con-Ank.
ENGLAND	F Nat-Mid, F Iri S F Nat-Mid, F Wal-Eng, A Bel-Hol, F Nth S A Bel-Hol, F Den H.
FRANCE	F Eng-Nth, A Ruh-Hol.
ITALY	A Bre-Pic, A Bur S A Bre-Pic, F Mid-Bre, A Mar-Gas, A Ven-Pie, F Wes-Mid, F Spa(sc) S F Wes-Mid, F Nap-Tyn, F Smy H.
RUSSIA	A StP-Nwy, F Bal-Swe, F Pru-Bal, A Mos-War, A Lvn S A Mos-War.

Fall/Winter 1909

AUSTRIA	A Kie S ENGLISH F Den, A Ber S A Kie, A Mun S A Kie, A Boh S A Mun, A Pru-Lvn, A Gal-War, A Sil S A Gal-War, A Mos-StP, A Ukr- Mos, A Rum-Sev, A Bul-Con, A Ank-Con. Owns: Bud, Tri, Vie, Bul, Rum, Ser, Ber, Kie, Mun, Con, War, Sev, Mos, Ank (14). Builds A Bud, A Vie.
ENGLAND	F Nat-Mid, F Iri S F Nat-Mid, F Wal-Lon, F Den H, A Bel-Hol,

F Nth S A Bel-Hol. Owns: Edi Lvp, Lon, Bel, Hol, Den (6).
Constant.

FRANCE F Eng-Bel, A Ruh S FEEng-Bel. Owns: Par, Por (0). Out.
ITALY F Spa(sc)-Por, F Wes-Mid, F Bre S F Wes-Mid, A Gas-Par, A Pic-Bel, A Bur S A Pic-Bel, A Pie-Mar, F Tyn-Lyo, F Smy H. Owns: Nap, Rom, Ven, Tun, Gre, Smy, Spa, Bre, Mar, Par, Por (11). Builds A Ven, F Nap.

RUSSIA A Lvn-StP, A Nwy S A Lvn-StP, F Swe-Ska, F Bal-Swe, A War-Mos (/r/ otb). Owns: StP, Nwy, Swe, ~~Mos~~, ~~Krk~~ (3). Removes F Swe.

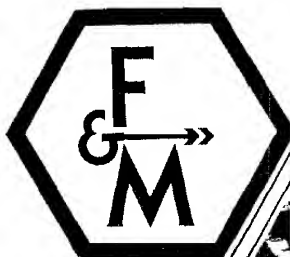
Spring 1910

AUSTRIA A Kie-Ruh, A Mun S A Kie-Ruh, A Ber-Kie, A Sil-Ber, A War-Sil, A Ukr-War, A Mos-StP, A Lvn S A Mos-StP, A Sev-Mos, A Boh H, A Vie-Tyo, A Bud H, A Bul-Ser, A Ank-Con.

ENGLAND F Nat-Mid, F Lon-Eng, F Iri S F Lon-Eng, F Nth-Bel, A Hol S F Nth-Bel, F Den H.

ITALY F Wes-Mid, F Por S F Wes-Mid, F Lyo-Spa(sc), F Bre-Eng, A Pic-Bel, A Par-Pic, A Bur-Ruh, A Mar-Bur, A Ven-Pie, F Nap-Tyn,

RUSSIA A Nwy S A StP, A StP S A Nwy, F Ska-Nth.



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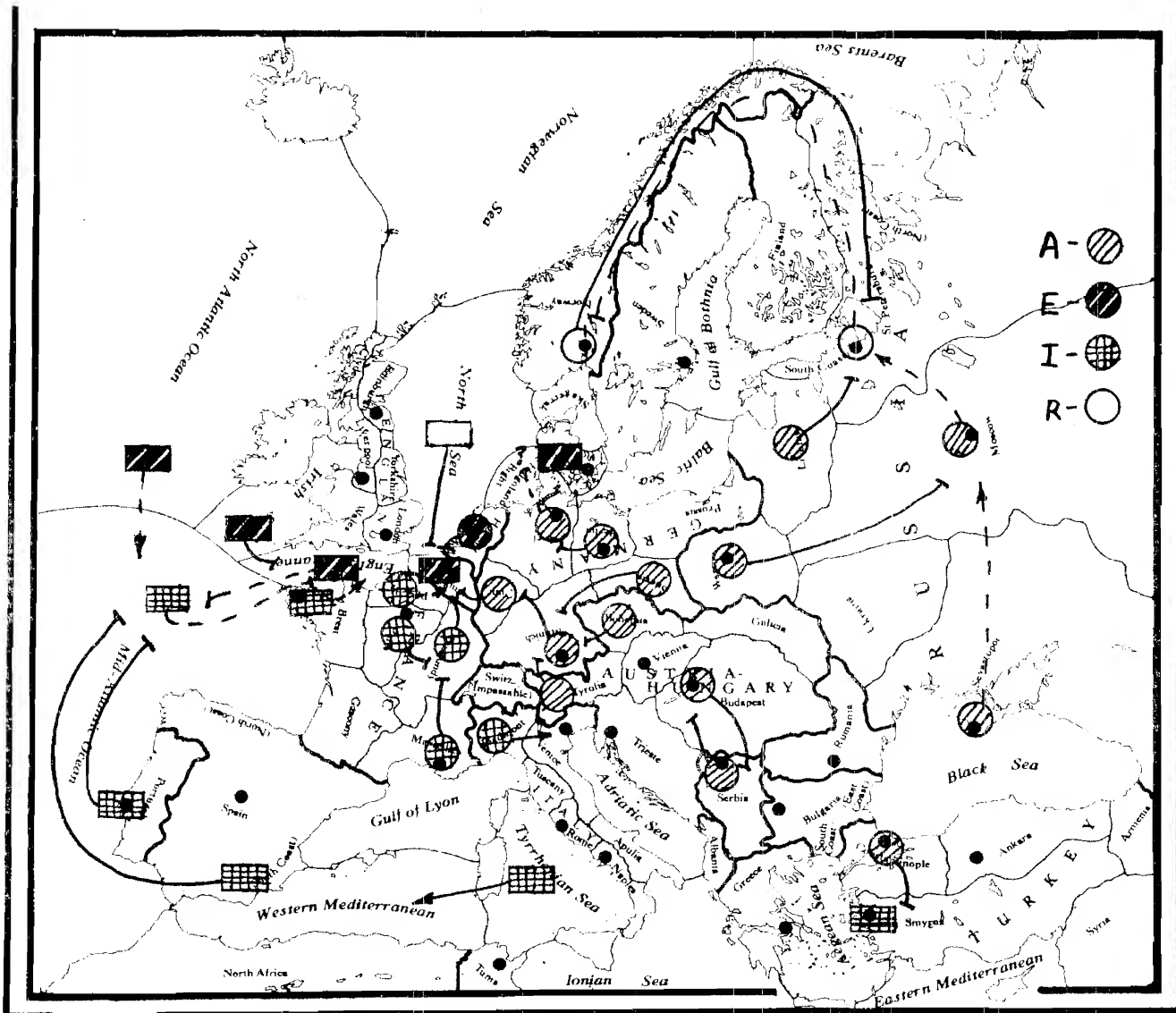
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Fall/Winter 1910

AUSTRIA	A Kie S RUSSIAN F Nth-Den (asc), A Ber S A Kie, A Ruh S ITALIAN A Pic-Bel, A Mun S A Ruh, A Sil S A Mun, A Boh S A Mun, A Tyo S A Mun, A Mos-StP, A Lvn S A Mos-StP, A Sev-Mos, A War S A Dev- Mos, A Bud S A Ser, A Ser S A Bud, A Con S ITALIAN F Smy.
ENGLAND	F Nat-Mid, F Eng S F Nat-Mid, F Iri S F Eng, F Bel H, A Hol S F Bel, F Den H.
ITALY	F Bre-Eng, F Mid S F Bre-Eng, F Por S F Mid, F Spa(sc) S F Mid, A Pic-Bel, A Bur S A Pic-Bel, A Par S A Bur, A War S A Bur, A Fie-Ven, F Tyn-Wes, F Smy H.
RUSSIA	A Nwy S A StP, A StP S A Nwy, F Nth S ENGLISH F Bel.

(Winter - No changes for anyone from Winter 1909.)

POSITIONS AFTER FALL 1910: The following map shows the positions of the game pieces following the moves printed here. Rectangles are fleets, circles are armies; the countries represented are shown on the right side of the map. A full line with a 'T' on the end indicates a successful support order; such lines when broken indicate a cut support. Broken arrows indicate unsuccessful moves. (Moves which succeeded are, of course, reflected in new unit positions.) This map was prepared by Eric P. Verheiden, Jr., based on a system developed by John A. McCallum.



WHAT ABOUT THAT SUBSIDY?

((EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article is anonymous. It was distributed in photocopy form to an unknown number of postal Diplomacy people on April 24, 1978, in the form of an "issue" of a "fanzine" called FACE-TO-FACE; there are several essays included, all dealing with one or another aspect of face-to-face play as distinct from postal play. "The High Horse" in the present DW was conceived and written before I saw the present item; has someone been reading my mind? This anonymous article was designed to spark controversy and discussion; I agree that the discussion is worthwhile; I am therefore reprinting one of the most relevant items from FACE-TO-FACE. As both author and publisher are unknown, I have no idea where you can write for your own copy of the issue.))

As some of you may know, Avalon-Hill (the owners of Diplomacy) provide a subsidy to the postal hobby, continuing a policy begun by the previous owners, Games Research. This generosity (we're talking about \$800 per annum here, no small peanuts) not only helps - or should help - the hobby, but forms a tangible form of expression from the owner. The question then naturally arises: Where does this money come from and where does it go? What are the relative shares of the postal and face-to-face hobbies?

Traditionally, the subsidy has gone into two activities. The first is the "Boardman Number Custodian." He is a record-keeper of postal games. For some reason, postal Diplomacy players want to keep statistical records of all the postal games. They print up the country-by-country, year-by-year supply center charts, along with the names of the players who played the position (even if only for one season). Usually, the Gamesmaster prints the information in his magazine when the game ends, then the Custodian does it all over again a few months later. The Custodian also assigns a unique label, the "Boardman Number," to each game. They are done in the same way as those other ephemeral objects, the comets: the year, and then a letter. 1978A would be the first for this year. Really dashing, romantic names, eh? Anyhow, as you can imagine, people don't exactly break down doors to get at this stuff, with the result that the Custodian runs in the red. The point of all this is that subsidy money which has gone to the Custodian has subsidized a purely postal activity. It is of virtually no interest whatsoever to a face-to-face player.

The other activity subsidized is the magazine DIPLOMACY WORLD, which Avalon-Hill owns. This presents a more mixed picture. There is a good deal of material of interest to the face-to-face player, and I recommend it highly. Numerous articles have appeared on alliances, openings and other topics. Variants are printed. There is also a "Demonstration Game" with successful postal players, complete with commentary. In addition to this appeals-to-both-types material, there is a good deal of space devoted to purely postal matters. Thus, there are periodic lists of all the Publishers presently publishing. There are always lists of publishers with game openings in regular (but, oddly, not variant) Diplomacy. Compilations of who has won or drawn postal games are given. Entire pages are taken up with rating lists, based on postal play, match. On the other side of the coin, there's practically no material targeted to the face-to-face player specifically. An article on face-to-face techniques is quite rare. There are occasional accounts of tournaments, but even these tend to be oriented to the doings of big-shot postal players. Thus, while DW has much appeal to a face-to-face player, its main appeal is for postal players.

So we see that Avalon-Hill's subsidy has traditionally been oriented toward the postal hobby. But where does the money come from? Presumably from the sales of Diplomacy sets. But who promotes these the most? Not postal players! They don't need to drag in more people to get up a game. They just write into a gamesmaster and wait until he collects seven names. If Avalon-Hill stopped selling the sets, postal players could keep going for years and never notice. Not so with face-to-facers. Take the plight of a person in a high school Diplomacy club or a college Strategic Games society. Time marches on; players graduate. Some develop other interests which push Diplomacy aside. It gets harder and harder to get up a full game, and there's only one solution: Recruit fresh blood! Turn the heads of those freshmen with Risk or Afrika Korps or Heinlein under their arms. We're the ones who sell the Diplomacy sets, Avalon-Hill, not those postal players. If you'd support us as much as you do them, the resultant growth in face-to-face Diplomacy would bring forth greater sales of Diplomacy sets. That would be good for you and for us, because it would make it easier for us to get up a game. The only people it might not be good for are the postal players. In the postal press you often hear the suggestion that maybe the postal hobby is too big already, and that certain postal institutions will be overwhelmed. You hear people reminiscing that it was better in the good old days when the hobby was smaller and more personal!

How can support of face-to-face play be expressed? First off, support for face-to-face tournaments - not just the big ones like Origins,

but those one-day minicons, too. Providing trophies or certificates would be a nice move. Maybe you could subsidize the entrance fees to the larger ones, which generally need such fees to cover the room rent. Remember, postal players are a little more affluent than we. They pay \$8-\$10 per game, typically, in fees and sub costs. They may pay an equal sum to that in postage cost and an occasional long-distance 'phone call. Face-to-facers in general aren't that well off.

I'm not suggesting that Avalon-Hill should cut off the postal hobby. Not at all. But I do think that as long as you do support the Diplomacy hobby, the dollars could be spread out a little more evenly.

((DIPLOMACY WORLD replies: There are a few factual inaccuracies here. Avalon-Hill does not own DW. Avalon-Hill does, I am given to understand, provide trophies and prizes for some tournaments. The \$800-per-year subsidy - actually, \$200 per issue - will terminate shortly, as soon as DW's circulation arrives at 1000, which is probably going to happen by the end of 1978 at the latest. And the description of DW's contents is a bit outdated, though not too. Of course, the paragraph describing the Boardman Number Custodian is pure yellow journalism; maybe you don't give a hoot about what he does, but that's hardly evidence that it's worthless, or that others are equally disinterested.

((The overriding point, however, remains well-taken: Why is "Diplomacy" invariably taken to mean "POSTAL Diplomacy?" Is it because face-to-face play is generally random and disorganized except at formal conventions? Is it because those conventions are often commercial ventures in themselves, sometimes by game manufacturers in competition with Avalon-Hill? Is it because the face-to-face "hobby" - if such terms can be applied to what is essentially an amorphous mass - has never applied for subsidy?

((Or is Avalon-Hill remiss? It's not to be disputed that face-to-face players are responsible for the bulk of game set sales. The majority of postal players find out about the postal hobby via flyers in the game sets, which of course means after they've bought the game. And postal Diplomacy can easily be played, unlike face-to-face, without a game set at all; a photocopy map and some pins will do. (At least one active postal publisher, in serious danger of copyright infringement, has offered to provide free Xerox maps to anyone who does not want to buy the game. Fortunately for Avalon-Hill - and, for other reasons, for the postal hobby - this gamesmaster is considered poor, and is not the subject of recommendation.)

((Comments on this bit are invited, for publication here. We'll print a cross-section of responses, though it will hardly be representative since, for now, most DW readers are still postally oriented.))

WANTED TO BUY OR BORROW

The following 'zines are missing from the Archives. If you can supply any of them, please contact Walter Buchanan, RR 3, Box 324, Lebanon, IN 46052, USA.

Adanack 8; Aerlion 1,3; Angbad 1-4; Attention 1,46-47; Avanti 15-21; Baltic Gaffer 1-4, 6,9; Baltic Sea 1-2,8,15; Barfy Blue 2,9; Barad-Dur 1.5,40.5; Batoche 16; Big Brother (all); Bolverk 1,3,6; Buffalo Diplomacy 106; Bulletin 2; Calcutta Chronicle 1,1-2; Carmilla 1,6; Cloak and Dagger 2-3,5 on; Corsair 7,15; Council Courier 77.1-2,77.4 on; Crush 41,43; Demons' Home 1-2; Eureka Stockade 9; Exponent 1, 5,34; Fearful Symmetry 18-19,24; Flash 1; Fre-donia 24-25; Frigate 1-11; Gaming Record "I," "II," III,1,3-5; Greekly Weekly VIII-IX; IDA Games Information Bulletin 1; If 1,2; I'm God 2; Infamous 2; Johnus 1,9; Kolwynia 3; Lebanon Gazette 33-35,50; Logenbeek 12-13; The Loner 23-28,30 on; Magazine Diplomacy Postal 15 on; Mango 13,18; Marsovia 13; Master Machiavellian 33; Mesklin Memos 7-12; Mini-Rigot 1; Mixumaxu Gazette 76; Moeshoeshoe 117; Moravian Dynasty 7, 13-15; Mush 8; Mutant 1,1-3; Narsil 7; The National 7-8; Nurse Shivoks 8; New World Fin-ster 1-3; Non Sequitur 1; Norstrillia Notes 25, 27; Phoenix 29-31; Phrederick the Great 7; Pink Dragon II,1-8; Polaska 1,5,8; Pragmatic Sanction (all); Ptarth 21; Rhiannon 1-2; Rigot 24-28,44; Rohan 1-2; Ruritania 8,33; Sarajevo 15; Skull and Crossbones 2-3,5,8; Slobinpolit Zhurnal 49, 57-58,60-62; Spald Jr. 1,2; Split Melk 1-10; Stormbringer 6-7; Sweetwater Canyon Daily Bugle 73; Terran 1-11; Thulcandra 24; Toorey Triennial Terrapin/Turtle/Tortoise 9; Triceratops 3-9; Udon 1; Victorius 1,4-5; Voice of the North 26; Warmonger 3-4,13,20,23; Windsor Weekly Wrag VI, 2-6, VII,3; World War III 1; Yggdrasil Chronicle 78.

Avam 7; Ad Nauseam 20; Albatross 1-7,11; Bellicus 34; Bron Yr Aur 3 on; Bruce 13; Chimaera 31; Comet 20-29; Cormorant 2 on; Court Circular -1,0,1-5,10,13; Depth Charge 17,19; Dolchstoss 50; Eclipsor 11; Enigma 5; Fall of Eagles 1-6,8; Filibuster 1-11; Finishing Touch 21; Forden's Epitaph 1-2; Gallimanfery 1-6,9; Gods Themselves 1; Gummiballs II,1,19; Hannibal 17,19-24; Howay the Lads (all); Hyperion 2 on; Japhidrew 5,16,22; Jigsaw 1-3,12; Lemming Express 2-3,17; Leviathan 8-13; Misteimer 1-2,5-6; Monthly Bureaucrat 1,3,7 on; Mr Gladgrind (all); Nitehawk 2,4-30,34-35; Norms 13,15; OJ 12-13; Our 'Enry 11,13; Pendulum 6,8 on; Polaris 3,17; Puppet Theatre News 20,37; Retief 12; Rhubovia 15; Sauce of the Nile 1-5,7; Shelob's Lair 3-5, 11,13; TFTBF 1; Tarkus 7 on; This Is It (all); Trojan Horse 23; TUCA 0,2-7; Ummagumma 2,4,7; Uriah's Heap 5; Variant Openings 1; War Bulletin 61-65; Yggdarsil 8-15; Your Albert 1,3-5; XL 14.

PLAY IT AGAIN

Several years ago, in the magazine Saguenay (now defunct) - which had the odd distinction of allowing only Canadians to play in its games, yet was published by a resident of the United States - there appeared a strange article. It was not obscene, yet it bordered on the scandalous. Nobody much liked it (as the editor's own readership poll revealed), yet it has since been reprinted six times by other publishers. It seems that it's about time for another reprinting, and since the article was written by none other than the editor of DIPLOMACY WORLD, and since several readers of DW have wondered why the Editor never writes anything for his own magazine, this seems as good a time as any to present the only known article which, in its very title, mortally insults the man who invented Diplomacy:

ALLAN B. CALHAMER IS A PHALLIC SYMBOL

by C. F. von METZKE

(Introductory note: This article is likely to tweak your mores. If you take offense, it clearly demonstrates unresolved conflict which would best be dealt with before you have a Big Blowup and strangle your wife. May I suggest my newest offering, weekly psychotherapy by cassette tape?)

Now, I think we can start right out by laying it on the line, if I may venture what will shortly prove to be a masterful pun of which I'm justifiably proud. We all know from reading Sigmund that everything in life is sexual. Diplomacy is no exception, but in this instance we are dealing with a relatively subtle form of sexual expression. After all, there aren't very many female Diplomacy players, and it is only rarely that you are able to avail yourself of the opportunity of supporting a girl into a province in return for her going to bed with you. No, unfortunately,

this golden opportunity is rare in our game. (There is, of course, the superb chance awaiting the homosexual player, but I prefer to avoid this field for the moment. I'm not about to clutter up my articles with lurid stories about a bunch of flaming fruits.)

We must therefore delve deeper. It can be shown, I think, that there is much to be found by so probing. Diplomacy is, after all, a game of interaction and interrelationship among several incredibly sexual human beings, and provides a breeding ground for several of Dr. Berne's favorite games. How sexual is one-upmanship? In what way does the annihilation of an army or fleet relate to sado-masochism? Is the self-standoff indicative of Oedipal conflict, or is perhaps the resultant open province a representation of the womb? Is it really true that an English opening move F Lon-Eng confides a lack of infantile fondling and/or a broken home? And what is the urge to get more and more units if not a graphic portrayal of an erection? (With a female player, this last feature of the game probably signifies the drive for pregnancy. This is a bit far afield, however, since no woman in her right mind wants to give birth to a bunch of wooden blocks. There might be a case for the armies and fleets representing eggs, if the female player were a trout.)

Well, let us begin at the beginning. (In psychoanalysis this is considered good. It is also expensive. Some day I hope to do a paper on the sexuality of psychotherapeutic cost structures.) In the first place, Diplomacy is not entirely subtle. Look at the cover of this magazine, or of any fanzine you happen to have to hand. Almost all are graced by one or another little drawings, designs, or doodles. Study them carefully. Note all the little pointed lines, stuck-out appendages, and the like. It doesn't require Bruno Bettelheim to tell you what you're really looking at.

That was Lesson One. Fifty dollars, please.

Even more basic to the game than those drawings is the Number One phallus of them all, the thin wooden block used to represent a fleet. (Actually, there is another contender for the Number One status that is of en more prominent.) And the square blocks for armies are just as definitely phallic; they don't look it because they have to be differentiated from fleets somehow, and sublimating their penile significance is as good a way as any. (There is a case to be made for the urge to build fleets in strength seen as penis envy; those who put England as their first choice are strongly urged to buy a cassette recorder.) (SPECIAL NOTE: In British game sets the symbolism is, if that is possible, still more blatant. Nothing resembles a well-formed breast more than one of those shell-shaped armies, and the plastic material from which the units are made doubtless indicates the futility of looking for such perfection

in real life. The coffin-shaped fleets are symbolic of the grave; clearly, a desire for naval strength is merely a sublimated death wish. These differences, of course, easily explain why the style of play in Britain is dissimilar to that in America.) In fact, this game is literally reeking with phallic symbolism: The long lines underscoring moves which fail; the dash used in orders to mean "moves to" (in which instance it is perhaps worthwhile interpreting, say, A Mun-Bur to read "A Mun attempts coitus with Bur"). There are innumerable others, but you get the - ah - point.

These phallic associatives are really incidental to, or rather symptomatic of, the meat of the issue. (God!) Diplomacy is a representation of war, and war as an institution is perhaps the single most sexual facet of human existence, except of course good old you-know-what. This is adequately demonstrated by the statistically incredible V.D. rate among Vietnam returnees. Then there are the more obscure psychiatric theories: The act of killing a man is really a decisive way of saying, "If you were a woman we'd make other arrangements;" The pair-bond of underlying sexuality between superior officer and subordinate, the civilian manifestations of which would get you arrested in Greenwich Village; the use of nicknames of affection for one's enemies (Gooks, Frogs, Krauts, Wops), related to the love-terms given to the marital partner's genitalia. If only to suggest a few. In fact, war, and by extension Diplomacy, is the only sexual act (well, the only other sexual act) that truly goes all the way.

This is quite sufficient, I think, to indicate that there's a lot more to Diplomacy than you thought! For further insight, consult the writings of Dr. Freud, certain passages from the books of Henry Miller, and/or your own conscience. And perhaps you ought to stop reading Diplomacy magazines in bed.

QUESTIONS for further study:

1. On the move in which you stab him, your ally miswrites his orders, enabling you to capture four of his supply centers. Do you achieve orgasm?
2. Discuss the phallic similarities between Silesia and Galicia. Be sure to mention the significance of moves from one to the other, with special emphasis on the defensive support order as sublimation.
3. England was your last choice, but you got it anyway. Is your libido playing tricks on you, or is the gamesmaster a fag?
4. You are England and have F Mid and F Nat. Italy has F Wes, F Naf and F Spa SC. France has F Por. Both France and Italy have been leading you on, but both are well known to be unfaithful. What are your best moves to prevent conception?

THE GUEST

G. M. :

A
GROWING
TREND
by ERIC P. VERHEIDEN, JR.

Anyone who has been in the postal hobby long enough at one time or another gets the urge to elevate himself above the petty squabbings of dogs in the manger and to run his very own game, accompanied by periodic pronouncements from Mt. Olympus.

In most cases, this involves a player starting up a new publication from scratch and gradually building up a readership. Some shining examples are: Graustark, ADAG, Hoosier Archives, Mixumaxu Gazette, to name only a few. Some less shining examples include: The Fighter's Home, Alternate Reality, El Conquistador, Sinai and many, many others. Typically, the new publisher runs off ten issues or so, finds that he has lost his taste for licking stamps and typing bad press, and simply disappears into the woodwork, never to be seen again. (Then there are those 'zines which have been resurrected as many times as Dracula, such as Costaguana and Erehwon; where is Von Hel-sing when we need him??)

In any event, for those with delusions of Godhood but an aversion to licking stamps, there is an alternative - become a guest gamesmaster. At its best, the arrangement is good for both the GM and the publisher. The publisher avoids a good number of those 2 a.m. 'phone calls, and gets a large share of his 'zine typed by someone else in advance. In addition to avoiding work, the publisher is able to run a larger number of games, attracting a larger circulation and thereby (hopefully) cutting his financial losses. The guest GM gets to run a game without the hassles of book-keeping, mailing and printing. Also, if he is working in a high-quality, established 'zine, he has no trouble finding players - or an audience.

These are some things a prospective guest GM should consider before jumping in. First, he should type his game report on a master or stencil directly, otherwise his assistance to the publisher is of limited value. Second, he should make sure that he is capable of making a prompt and accurate game report, every season, as long as the game lasts. This may be two or three real years (or more), and some effort is required in checking and double-checking the adjudications. Third, if by some misfortune the parent 'zine should fold, the guest GM should be prepared to transfer or run out the orphaned game himself. This happened in the case of Fighter's Home, for instance.

My own game, in Claw & Fang, is settling down into the mid-game after some violent early action, and I am considering opening another of some sort. The publisher, Don Horton, runs quite a few games and, despite some bad taste in the choice of a couple of guest GMs (Roderick and Brucie, do you hear me?), he seems to have things well under control.

VARIANT INFORMATION

by ROBERT SACKS

First some information that should have been in last issue, but didn't get to Conrad in time: Miller Numbers are now being assigned by Douglas Mills, ASSOCIATE MNC for Europe, 210 Bramhall Lane South, Bramhall, Stockport, Cheshire, U.K., for all of Europe; and by Michael Smolin, ACTING MNC, 868 Russet Dr., Sunnyvale, CA 94087, U.S.A., for the rest of the world. If you have any problems obtaining Miller Numbers, Robert Sacks, MNC ON LEAVE, 4861 Broadway 5-V, New York, NY 10034, U.S.A., would be interested in full details.

Some of you might wonder what Sacks is doing as Miller Number Custodian these days. His principal project is the recategorization of the Miller Numbers. As of the beginning of May, opinions are being sought on the "ra" (reduced player) and "wa" (Youngstown) designator series. The objective, which is subject to some debate, is to categorize all variants in play beyond the playtest stage, together with a few variants of historical interest, while combining the designators for almost-identical variants. Comments should be sent to Sacks, who can also provide data on the program as it currently stands.

Last issue (18) I commented on the disagreements that could take place on the staff of DIPLOMACY WORLD, and there goes Pulsipher proving my point. I do wish to point out that he is mistaken in his suggestion that DVC was anti-European. He surely cannot forget they key votes in the DVC (when it was the old Variant Committee of the IDA) that he lost and the Europeans won - those concerning the seating of the AMNC/Europe, the British and European VB Directors, and the NGC Variants Secretary, and the determination that Intimate Diplomacy was to be considered a variant. It therefore gives us pleasure to announce the formation of the International Variant Association, because Pulsipher will believe we did it only to spite him. ((The Editor of DIPLOMACY WORLD rather seriously doubts this.))

The history of organizational support for variants in the Diplomacy hobby has not been impressive. Groups organized for wargaming in general or for regular Diplomacy were never enthusiastic about supporting projects in the variant hobby and have consistently failed to understand the special needs of variant hobbyists. At one time the IDA and DVC worked out

a compromise plan of action in variants designed to remedy this, but the IDA was amended out of existence before the plan could be considered, and two presidents of the IDA/NA have refused to place the plan or key parts of it before the IDA/NA Council. Therefore, it seems necessary to form a group oriented toward variant Diplomacy able to support projects and services in the variant hobby through its own efforts. Two past efforts to organize the variant hobby (DVC and WVA) did not succeed to the degree intended. The WVA has collapsed for the second or third time owing to lack of leadership, and the DVC does not seem to be an appropriate instrument for all persons interested in variant organization. Therefore, in its last series of votes before it adjourned for the year, the Diplomacy Variant Commission amended its rules to provide for a new group, the International Variant Association.

The IVA is to have full control over its own votes, finances, projects and publications. Except for the annual election (conducted in December by the Secretary), the President conducts business by general agreement or with the concurrence of a majority of those voting. The Association elects a President, Treasurer, and Editor, with DVC providing a Secretary, Director, and Ombudsman, and acting officers when vacancies occur. The Association is represented on DVC by its three officers, other officers jointly established, and a number of representatives in proportion to its membership but at least 4 from distinct geographic regions (initially established as the United States, Canada, Continental Europe and the British Isles and other Commonwealth). Annual membership dues may be set at any amount, but at least one dollar (and have initially been set at three dollars).

That is the totality of the rules governing IVA (unless it chooses to write some of its own). Robert Sacks (address elsewhere in this column) is serving as Secretary, Director, acting President and acting Treasurer until the first election. Send \$3 annual membership dues to him to cover the first year starting with the publication of the IVA's regular publication - time prior to then is free. Volunteers for Ombudsman and acting Editor should also apply to him.

((NOTE: The following variant news item is written by the editor of DIPLOMACY WORLD. It does not reflect the opinions or policies of any of the DW variant columnists, and is in no way endorsed by them; it does, however, represent the policy of DIPLOMACY WORLD insofar as the future of this section of the magazine is concerned.))

In various past issues, references have been made to various Variant Banks, of which one is the North American Variant Bank (a.k.a. World

Variant Bank, North American Branch) under the direction of Dave Kadlecsek. In recent months, in fact for a very long time now, there have been numerous complaints that Mr. Kadlecsek is not properly operating the Bank, and two or three attempts - by Dick Vedder, Conrad von Metzke, and most recently Fred Davis - have been made to induce Kadlecsek to turn the Bank over to someone else more capable of running it. Dave has ignored or resisted these efforts. Despite periodic assurances of improvement, the service from the NAVB has deteriorated steadily, and we now have reports from several people of no service at all.

Mr. Kadlecsek's most recent pronouncement on the subject (letter of April 28, 1978, to Fred Davis, in response to Fred's request to take charge of the Bank), reminds me very much of one Richard Milhous Nixon: "I appreciate your offer regarding taking over the NAVB, but I do not feel that I can accept it at this time. Though I realize that I am not now performing my duties in a very satisfactory manner, and I would expect that you would probably do a better job in many respects than I can now, I feel that I have a responsibility (perhaps more to myself than to the hobby) not just to cut my losses and give up, but to do something to notably advance the NAVB before I turn it over." Dave then goes on to delineate some of his difficulties in managing the Bank - lack of duplicating service, for instance.

DIPLOMACY WORLD is, and all variant activists ought to be, appalled and angry. It has now been two years - or is it three? - since Kadlecsek took charge of the NAVB. In all that time, we've had essentially nothing done to "notably advance" the Bank; all we've had are periodic promises and assurances coupled with reports of poor service, lack of information, etc. There is real doubt that the Bank is even up-to-date; no known evidence exists that Dave has even added the last two (or three) years' variant publications to the Bank, much less let anyone know about it. There is no catalogue of the Bank. There is just irregular photocopying, with luck, of all the work that Dick Vedder and Dan Gallagher did long ago, which otherwise just sits in Dave's personal file and mildews.

There are several possible solutions, some of which may work and some of which may not. In any event, DIPLOMACY WORLD urges that something be done, right now, to solve this muddle.

1. Except insofar as getting the Variant Bank away from him is concerned, Kadlecsek's existence - and the NAVB insofar as he represents it - should be ignored. DO NOT send any further orders, and above all DO NOT endorse, publicize or offer to help with any more nebulous schemes which may come from Dave.

2. A massive protest may not do any good, but it probably won't hurt. Of course there is no way, short of armed robbery, that Dave

can be forced to relinquish the material, but by God, armed robbery is awfully tempting. (Dick Vedder and I were at one time contemplating a lawsuit, but of course that's not feasible.)

3. Sad though it may be to have to say it, the only real solution in practical terms seems to be the formation and construction of an all-new NAVB under the tutelage of someone who is competent. The work involved is staggering, but I'm sure variant archivists - Haas, Pulsipher, Sacks, etc. - would be happy to help to the best of their abilities if they were given a sincere effort to work with.

Mr. Kadlecsek's current address is 833 Loring Avenue, Crockett, CA 94525, USA. For suggestions on Item 3 above, DIPLOMACY WORLD will be more than happy to pass along any comments or offers to the interested variant people, e.g. Sacks and Davis.

VARIANT DESCRIPTIONS

by DER GARVEY

FOUNDATION GAME I // Fritz Mulhauser // 7 // s1 // aw // 60 areas.

This game is based on the Foundation Trilogy by Isaac Asimov, and the board for it is completely abstract. The supply centers are simply intersections of lines at various places.

The players in this game are: Empire Colonies, First Empire, First Foundation, Union of Worlds (The Mule), Second Foundation, Association of Independent Traders, and Tazenda. As in the books, Second Foundation is not a military force, but is rather a player devoted to mental development. In this game his job is to attempt to predict the moves of the other players, and every time he succeeds the First Foundation player gets an extra "free" fleet. Second Foundation can only win the game if the First Foundation player reaches the victory criterion with over half his units being "free" ones. He is thus unlikely to win, and the rules recommend that this player should be a volunteer, as he is anonymous throughout the game.

The rules are exceptionally well made and presented, and this is just as well since the map could become hopelessly confusing.

Since hyperspace links can be made in this game, joining any two places within the same module, play balance is quite good, because any oversight in supply center distribution can be rectified during play.

If the players can relate to the 3 modules

which make up the map, then they could find this an entertaining game; if they can't, they could get very lost very quickly. Reading the books helps.

RATINGS:

Balance - ++++++
Clarity - ++++++
Worth - +++++

ANCIENT EMPIRES I // John Boyer // 5 or 7 // ?? // ?? // 17 // 36 // 22

This game is a sort of cross between fantasy and history. The 7 home players, Troy, Sparta, Rome, Carthage, Corinth, Athens and Atlantis, are all placed about a board which has no historical basis, i.e. it is an imaginary map. The home nations could just as easily have been called Japan, Jamaica, etc.

The map is a mini-world affair. Movement is allowed off one side of the map and onto the other, and similarly from top to bottom, so there are no corners and attack can literally come from any direction. The game is fairly small, with only 17 supply centers in all, and a victory criterion of only 9. 7 of the centers are fortified, which require a supported attack to occupy. Centers are at a premium, therefore, and open war is likely to break out early.

This is one of those games where diplomatic skill is much more important than military ability. You will find yourself losing very fast if you can't find a friend. Remember, a player with even 3 or 4 units is already very strong.

This should be fairly good face-to-face, or postally for that matter, as a fast game. The game reports would be boring, however, since the areas don't have names, only numbers and letters.

RATINGS:

Balance - ++++++
Clarity - ++++++
Worth - +++++

GUELPH // Robert Bawtinheimer // 5 // 114 // fr // 23 // 10 // 42

This is the only game I've come across based in South America ((There is at least one other, Rob Perkins' old CONTINENT - Editor)), and since fleets can move through Panama, the map can be considered an island. (Note: The name of the game derives from the home town of the designer; it is unrelated to the scenario.)

This is a 5-player game: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, New Granada and Peru, and is supposed to simulate the War of the Pacific, 1869-73. It's a very simple variant really, with no special rules, just a new map. Unfortunately, the map leaves something to be desired.

Chile and Argentina are squeezed into the Horn, while Brazil is somewhat isolated from the rest. Add to this the Amazon and Parana Rivers,

which cut deep into the mainland, and one or two major loopholes come to light. The sea spaces are too large, which limits the number of fleets it is practical to have on the board. Due to the rivers, and to impassable mountain regions, movement by land can be slow and cumbersome, and far more emphasis should be laid on naval power; after all, only one home supply center, and 3 centers in all, are not accessible by sea.

A more even distribution of the players' home supply centers as well as the neutrals, and an increase in the number of sea spaces, would convert this game into one much better. Maybe a revision is in order. In its present form, though, I don't really recommend it.

RATINGS:

Balance - +++++
Clarity - ++++++
Worth - +++++

INTIMATE DIPLOMACY I-A // Steve Doubleday, Greg Hawes and Adrian Baird // 2 // r58 // gk // regular board

This game is about the only really successful attempt to produce a 2-player game. Normally, a 2-player game would fall flat because of the lack of a need for diplomacy. This tends to take the spice out of the game.

In Intimate Dip., this is replaced by a bidding system to buy mercenaries. This system introduces a certain amount of risk and uncertainty to the game, and brings it back to life.

At the start, each player makes out a preference list of home country, and from this starting positions are determined. There is also then an allocation of cash. With this money players try to buy the services of the other 5 powers for one year. The highest bid for each wins.

Each Autumn the players get more cash and bid for the nations again. The game goes on like this until one player gets an army of his home country into a home supply center of the other player.

The quality of the rules depends upon which version you look at. Pete Birks published one version of the game in GAMES AND PUZZLES recently, which, while an adequate description of the game, was not very comprehensive and left some loopholes.

The version I-A, though, is very good, with rules to cover most eventualities.

A good game, this, especially if you want to get revenge on somebody. Just get someone willing to gamesmaster it, then issue a challenge to the victim to come out and fight like a man! (Of course, he may stomp you, but....)

RATINGS:

Balance - ++++++
Clarity - ++++++ (Version I-A)
Worth - +++++

NUCLEAR DIPLOMACY I

by JAD DITTMAR

1. Nuclear Diplomacy I and the rules of standard Diplomacy are the same except as follows:

2. There are three types of unit in ND-I: armies, fleets and nuclear missiles (hereinafter NMs).

3. During the build season, to acquire more units a player pays CREDITS.

4. Credits are the economic base of the game. Each supply center is worth one credit per game year, BUT see Rule 7.

5. Each player has a public account of credits. Any player may lend credits to other players. No rule enforces repayment. BUT see rules 32 and 33.

6. The standard starting positions are used, and each player starts with an empty account.

7. At the start of the game, each player must designate one of his supply centers as his capital. The player's capital is worth two credits per year.

8. A player may at any time change the position of his capital. This is done by simply designating the change. Any supply center under control of the player the previous Fall turn may be that player's capital.

9. If a player's capital is captured, the capturing player treats it as any other center and receives one credit for it. The player losing his capital must redesignate a new one the following Spring.

10. Credits are tabulated after the Fall moves and retreats. Then, before the Winter adjustments, each player receives his total credits due.

11. On completion of payment of credits, players adjust their units.

12. Armies and fleets cost one credit per year and are paid for before the upcoming year. The starting units are already paid for. NMs are paid for once only; their cost is three credits each.

13. During the Winter adjustments, a player may build or disband units, NOT BOTH. (A player may still disband dislodged units.) Players must disband units if they do not have enough credits to keep up the payments.

14. Players may build units in any supply center that is controlled by them.

15. To build a NM, the player does the same as with other units, specifying the province where the NM will be built. More than one NM

may be in the same province.

16. NMs may not be returned for the three credits, but may be given to other players as in Rule 31.

17. A player wishing to fire a NM writes an order in form like those for army and fleet orders. If more than one NM is in the starting province, the player must specify which is being fired. E.g.: NM2 Par-Mun.

18. When a NM is sent to a province, the units in that province are destroyed (sea spaces included).

19. The destruction of a space lasts for one turn - the turn on which the NM was fired. If a NM lands in Gascony in Spring, units may move freely to Gascony in Fall.

20. Rule 18 takes effect after completion of a move with retreats; thus, units moving out of the destroyed province on the same turn, and any unit forced to retreat from the province on the same turn, are not destroyed.

21. Any support being given from the destroyed space on the same turn is null and void.

22. Units may NOT retreat to a space destroyed on the same turn.

23. If an NM is fired into a sea space where an army is being convoyed, the army holds in its starting space and the fleet is destroyed.

24. If an NM is fired into a space where a NM is located, that NM is destroyed.

25. If a NM is fired into a supply center owned by any power, the center becomes neutral. It can be reclaimed. If it was a home center and is reclaimed by the power whose home center it was, it becomes a home center again.

26. If the center is a capital, the player whose capital it was must designate a new one the next turn. Note that this may cause a player to get fewer credits on a particular Fall turn.

27. If two or more NMs are sent simultaneously to the same space, the effect is as if only one missile hit the space.

28. If two or more NMs are sent to each other's spaces, they hit it mid-air and destroy themselves with no damage on the ground.

29. If two NMs from one space are sent to a space from which one NM is coming to the first space, one missile on each side collides in mid-air; the third goes on.

30. If an NM is sent to one space, and another NM is sent from the latter space to a third space, both moves go through.

31. To lend credits, a player must specify the number of credits lent and the country being lent to.

32. A lender of credits MAY make his loan conditional on what is to be done with the money. Once units are built using lent money, however, the lender has no control over the units.

33. If a player captures a space where a NM is located, he also captures the missile.

34. A player may exist in the game without

supply centers or without units, but not without both.

35. Once a NM has been built, it stays in the province in which it is located until fired.

36. In face-to-face play, the author suggests that NMs be represented on the board using sideways fleet pieces.

Questions or comments may be sent to Jad Dittmar, 1235 Birch Road, Homewood, IL 60430, USA.

VARIANT DESIGN

by LEWIS PULSIPHER

A DIALOGUE ABOUT VARIANT DESIGN

between Ken St.Andre and myself. In a series of letters we have been disagreeing about this subject since I encountered Peters' HYBORIAN and St.Andre's BARSOOMIAN variants and made various remarks, ending with the first part of the dialogue below. Our comments are naturally somewhat unpolished since we just wrote as things came to mind. The date and the initials of the writer precede each set of comments, and much extraneous material has been edited out.

Pulsipher (LP)(May): It's nice that you guys in Phoenix have become variant fans, but if you don't go about producing variants efficiently you can do more harm than good. Sloppiness and poor play balance are the bane of variant fandom, but that's what we appear to be getting from you guys. I hope it's a false impression.

St.Andre (KSA)(June 1): Neither you nor von Metzke has played HYBORIAN (Peters' variant). I have. Several times. In face to face play the game is generally called between the 10th and 20th moves and awarded to the player with the plurality of supply centers. It is not uncommon for there to be 6 players left in the game at that time with a separation of no more than 5 supply centers/armies between the first place and sixth place players. As for which player wins, it seems to be pretty much up in the air...it is very much a matter of diplomacy, because even the strongest country can be knocked out when two or three of its neighbors decide to do it in....

My limited experience with variants is that no matter how thorough the rules are, you always wind up having to explain something to somebody. Rules for all my variants assume (1) that the players already have some idea of how to play Diplomacy, and (2) that players will use some

of their own imagination, look at the map, and try to follow the reasoning that led to the questionable rule....

Here comes a statement you will undoubtedly deplore, but it represents my attitude toward Diplomacy gaming. The Dip establishment has, in my opinion, become something of a nit-picking priss (noun form of prissy via back formation). Compiling total statistics on every regular and variant game played through the mails. The object here is enjoyment and the flight of imagination, not statistics. Rigor is less desirable than speed in transforming an idea into reality. If everyone reads your rules, looks at your map, and refuses to play, the variant will die an early death; thus the sport is self-regulating.

LP (June 8): Barring perhaps some of the Tolkien variants, any Dipvar offers reasonably balanced play WHEN THE PLAYERS KNOW THE GAME AND ARE GOOD PLAYERS. No doubt when you lot play Peters' game it comes out all right. But people who see it in DW or anywhere outside your little group won't be aware of the problems, and for that matter many of them will be inexperienced in all Diplomacy play. In that situation, the situation which counts, the balance is bad. Von Metzke or I can see it right off, but we've played the game by mail at least 8 years, and even we couldn't say exactly which countries have the advantage in each situation. Most players are much worse off.

I believe Dipvars can be written with sufficient clarity that only those who are going to be confused by ANY set of rules will have major questions. A problem with Dipvar rules is that people aren't always reasonable when a problem arises in the course of a game for which there is no referee. Too many are conditioned by the rules to try anything, no matter how underhanded, in order to win. You can't have a reasonable discussion of rules in an atmosphere founded on that attitude.

...I've seen too many people and groups go through the hobby with your attitude, to fade away and leave no legacy except a poor reputation for Dipvars. I'm not very keen on stats and so on personally - I'm one of the few people who don't think it would be a disaster if the Boardman Number system and ratings disappeared - but I would like to see standards improved, not remain in the same old slapdash flash-in-the-pan rut. Rigor is far more desirable than speed; there are dozens if not hundreds of speedily produced junkheap variants, so why take a chance on adding to the pile?

KSA (June 22): First of all, I have no sympathy for beginning Dip players who might get in over their heads. It is a great way to learn to swim. Second, by the time a person has enough interest in Dip to subscribe to or even read DW, they should be well past the fumbling amateur stage in their development as a player. Third, in any Dipvariant that makes an attempt to design a game around some well-known fantasy world, a certain amount of imbalance is forced upon the

designer by the author's original choice of geography and power alignments. In HYBORIAN Aquilonia, Turan, Nemedia, Vendhya and Stygia have to be strong powers because that is the way Howard created them. Peters read and reread the whole available Conan saga while designing his game and specifically tailored things to be as faithful as possible to the spirit of the stories while still leaving Conan out of things. Fourth, the optional gamesmaster units have never been used, so all objections to their hypothetical part in play of the game are merely a wasting of breath. Fifth, the backstabbing nature of the original Dip rules is such that any game based on them is bound to engender at least temporary hard feelings when a person gets knifed. Players definitely should be able to do anything that is legal (or even logical) under the rules in order to win, and if one person sees an advantageous loophole at one time, it will not be long before everyone in the game knows about it. In any case, play-by-mail variants, such as Barsoomian, Kregen, Hyborian, whatever, all have an impartial arbiter as their very foundation, thus questions of rule interpretation are all handled by one man. Players retain their freedom of choice - either go along with the interpretation of the GM or quit and try to find someone else who will treat them better. A GM who angers all of his players soon won't have any, and will automatically cease to be of any importance. Sixth, when you mix decidedly weaker-player countries with stronger-player countries, it forces more real diplomacy to surface, as the only way the little guys can hope to win is by teaming against the big guys. For all of these reasons I maintain that Peters' game is as good, exciting and interesting a variant as any around.

LP (late June/early July, and somewhat curt because I ran out of space on the aerogramme!): First...most variant players are beginners so far as variants are concerned. They usually drown rather than learn to swim if immediately thrown into quicksand. Second, most DW subbers are rank beginners - where do you think the recent doubling of circulation has come from? Third, designing a variant around a fantasy world is no more difficult - less difficult because there's less information - than designing an historical variant. So much fudging is necessary to adapt the peculiar game system that one may as well make the thing balanced on the way. Fourth, optional rules are printed to be played, so objections are quite germane whether they've actually been played before or not. Fifth, most people disagree with your view of "anything is fair" in Diplomacy, believe it or not. Sixth, postal-only variants are a dying breed, and GMs aren't often available for face-to-face. I'll never put a postal-only variant in DW unless it takes very little room. GMs virtually never get such bad reputations that they can't find players - there is only one example of this exclud-

ing those who actually quit outright ((There is? Who?? - DW Editor)) - and even in that case the ones already suckered in were stuck. News travels slowly in Diplomacy. Little guys and big guys is all right IF everyone realizes ahead of time that the ganging-up is necessary. Players assume it is not, and most aren't good enough to see it when they take up a new game.

KSA (July 12): One of my basic feelings about game design is that life isn't fair, and that games shouldn't be either. I'm very competitive, and the idea of winning against odds is more attractive to me than merely winning a fair fight. In a case of big guys and little guys I count upon the natural intelligence of my players to figure out what they will have to do to even things out or give themselves a chance. And I also make myself available to anyone who will take the trouble to simply ask me about anything that bothers them. I will not reveal what other players are doing, but I'm glad to share any strategic knowledge about the game that might help them make a better move than a beginner might ordinarily make.

I also try to show people who correspond with me that I don't consider myself infallible or my rules perfect. Things need to be tried out. If I make a mistake, I'll know better next time, and meanwhile let's correct it and forget it, and either get on with the game or forget the whole thing.

With so many major issues, crimes, hoaxes, shoddy merchandise, etc., in the world, I don't believe that getting stuck in a Diplomacy variant that you don't enjoy is that big a deal. If you don't like the game, quit. I don't believe that I have any responsibility at all to the rest of the Diplomacy-playing world - I'm doing this game design and magazine publishing for my own enjoyment and at my own expense...I have a personal responsibility to my players to try and make their gaming enjoyable, and I do my best, but that is all.

...One thing I am against is standardization - the thought of everyone playing nothing but the original European 1901 game of Diplomacy is enough to make me puke. At GLASC-II convention, it was a real bummer not to be able to gather a mere 6 players or so to try one fantasy variant, especially when I brought five along, but that's their prerogative.

This letter has gotten pretty far afield - I guess I just can't accept your hostile attitude regarding outlooks on Dipdom....

LP (19-20 July): I never thought it a justification for lousy work to say that other people do lousy work, nor do I think it a justification for poor variants to say that many other things in the world are poor, unfair, etc. If you can't make the variant good enough that people won't quit because of poor construction, regardless of the merit of the ideas, you shouldn't be doing it in the first place. I suppose this presents

a perfectionist's as against your - what shall I call it? - impatient young man's view. Even idealist's view? I don't know.

Or it may be that I'm the idealist, you the cynic. I would like to see standards raised so that fewer people will waste their time or be put off by a lousy first experience. You seem to regard it as part of the game, and devil take the hindmost. Is this a fair statement?

Then again, you are idealistic in your view that people OUGHT to like variants. Whether they ought to or not, they often don't give two hoots for them. Your experience at GLASC-II was not at all uncommon. People don't often like variants, Ken, and the ONLY way to get more people to like variants is to raise the standard of variant design. The most frequently heard objection to variants in this country ((U.K.)) is that none is as good a game as standard Dip. You know that's not true, and I know it, but too many people learn about variants via some junkheap someone threw together, and they assume all variants are the same kind of junk. Yes, I'm downright hostile to junk variants, because I've seen what it does to variant fandom when people encounter the things.

Oh, yes. I agree, life isn't fair. Isn't that a good reason for making games fair, since games are a form of escape from life? You can say all you want about mental competition and so on, in the end games are escape, whatever else they may be.

"Counting upon the natural intelligence" of your players is all very well IF experience bears out your assumption. It does not. Even in a balanced and familiar game, when a player forges into the lead players as often as not line up to see who will get second place rather than gang up on the leader. (Note the statistics in Berch's article for the country most vulnerable to a gang.) So much for "natural intelligence." You have to remember, Ken, that there is disagreement about the basic objective in Diplomacy. An ASTONISHING number of players prefer second place, what I call a loss, to a draw of any sort, what I call a partial win (at least you haven't lost). I suspect you don't play for second, nor do I, but a great many players DO, and you must take that into account when you design a variant. You simply cannot assume everyone plays the same way you or your group do.

((At this point I sent Ken a copy of the article thus far, in case he wanted to add something.))

KSA (Aug. 24): ...your long paragraph, where you state that fantasy variants are no more difficult to design than historical variants. I believe I admitted that but also stated that I think they are more interesting, because (1) of the local color and excitement imparted to a particular world, and (2) because of the chance to try out radically innovative rules to conform

to some special practice in the author's writing.

I would like to put in a comment on our different basic attitudes. You take a protective, paternalistic view which assumes that most gamers don't want to and shouldn't have to use their brains or imagination to understand anything. I, on the contrary, assume the best of players; that is, they WILL know what they are doing, and if they don't know, then they deserve to be beaten by players who do know. My whole attitude is Caveat Diplomator. Laissez-faire rather than paternalism.

LP (Oct. 10): In your letter is a perfect example of some of the things I've been talking about. I told you your Aztlán Rule 3.2 ((about armies and their relationship to economic spaces)) wasn't clear. You say I should reread it and "see introduction where it is clearly stated that Aztlán is a blitz variant, which means multiple armies and interesting rules." But I HAD seen the introduction, and as a very experienced variants rule-reader I went over 3.2 quite carefully before I wrote you. You can't expect people to know what you mean by "blitz variant," YET YOU DON'T EXPLAIN WHAT YOU MEAN IN THE RULES! Even if, in the rules, you had included the latter part of the sentence you wrote to me, you wouldn't have clarified it. "Interesting rules" can mean anything, and I can name a dozen variants with multiple armies of one sort or another, not one of which regularly permits one economic location to support more than one unit (which Aztlán does, so to speak) - in fact, most of them maintain a one-to-one relationship between each unit of strength and each center, even though more than one unit of strength may occupy the same space. You can't expect people to read your mind - your ignorance of others who use the same idea (multiple armies) with a different economic base doesn't excuse you. Unlike the character in Alice in Wonderland, you can't make words mean anything you want them to.

We haven't been on the same wavelength. You speak of what you would like to think gamers are like. I haven't said anything about what I wish they were like, I only speak of what they ARE like. Wishful thinking won't make people conform to one's ideas...To ASSUME the best of players doesn't make your assumption true. Your assumption merely means, in practice, that those more adept at guessing, or with minds more like yours, or who have better access to your interpretations, have an advantage over those who don't. My attitude is not paternalistic, it is realistic. Everywhere one looks in gaming, especially "behind the scenes" as I've been able to observe here through Games & Puzzles and Games Workshop, the FACT that gamers don't read carefully and are easily confused becomes more and obvious. At times it becomes quite incredible, but that's the way it is. Diplomacy players are no different from any other kind of strategic game players in this respect.

Since last printed in DIPLOMACY WORLD 16, this chronological list of currently active Diplomacy publishers has gone out of date. This is due to many new 'zine starts, changes of address, and the high attrition rate of Diplomacy publishers in general. I have listed all publishers in order from the time they first began publication, noting with an asterisk the ones who have had publishing breaks of over three months. For those publishers a footnote in parentheses has been added after the name. A list of the publishing periods of these publishers can be found at the end of the survey. (A few British publishers may be omitted, as I haven't heard from them in reply to a trade offer.) I'd like to encourage all present and potential publishers to trade with me and with Cal White, the Boardman Number Custodian, in order that we can keep up-to-date records on the hobby.

ARCHIVES PUBLISHERS' SURVEY

- 1963
1. May 12 John Boardman, 234 E. 19th St., Brooklyn, New York 11226
- 1965
2. Apr 1* Conrad von Metzke, P.O. Box 626, San Diego, California 92112 (1)
- 1966
3. Jul 15 Hal Naus, 1011 Barrett Ave., Chula Vista, California 92011
- 1967
4. Dec* Doug Beyerlein, 640 College, Menlo Park, California 94025 (2)
- 1969
5. Jul 2 Don Turnbull, 5 Greelands, Red Cross Lane, Cambridge, U.K. CB2 2QY
- 1971
6. Jan 24 Walter Buchanan, R.R. #3, Box 324, Lebanon, Indiana 46052
7. Sep Herb Barents, R.R. 4, 1142 S. 96th Ave., Zeeland, Michigan 49464
8. Sep Michel Liesnard, Ave de Tervueren, 415, B-1150 Bruxelles, Belgium
- 1972
9. Jan 31* John Piggott, Flat 6, 15 Freeland Rd., London W.5, U.K. (3)
10. Jan 31 John Van De Graaf, 37343 Glenbrook, Mt. Clemens, Michigan 48043
11. Mar Fred Davis, 1427 Clairidge Rd., Baltimore, Maryland 21207
12. Sep Jim Benes, 417 S. Stough St., Hinsdale, Illinois 60521
13. Sep John Leeder, 1211 5th St. NW, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2M 3B6
14. Oct Richard Sharp, 27 Elm Close, Amersham, Bucks, U.K.
15. Nov 1 Mike Bartnikowski, 943 Stewart, Lincoln Park, Michigan 48146
16. Nov 15 Mick Bullock, 14 Nursery Ave., Halifax, W. Yorkshire, U.K. HX3 5SZ
17. Dec Enrico Manfredi, Via Vecchia di Barbaricina, 20, I-56100 Pisa, Italy
- 1973
18. Jan 1 Don Horton, 16 Jordan Ct., Sacramento, California 95826
19. Jun 15 Robert Lipton, 556 Green Pl., Woodmere, New York 11598
20. Oct Peter Walker, R.R. 3, Belfast, Prince Edward Island, Canada C0A 1A0
21. Dec 20* John Mirassou, Rt. 2, Box 623AC, Morgan Hill, California 95037 (4)
22. Dec 21 Steve Norris, 1161 Greenland Ave., Nashville, Tennessee 37216
- 1974
23. Jan 1 Jim Bumpas, 948 Loraine Ave., Los Altos, California 94022
24. Feb 24 Roland Prevot, 16 rue Descombes, 75017 Paris, France

25. Apr 27 Douglas Reif, 67 Grosvenor Rd., Kenmore, New York 14223
 26. Jun Raymond Heuer, 102-42 Jamaica Ave., Richmond Hill, New York 11418
 27. Jun Richard Loomis (Flying Buffalo, Inc.), P.O. Box 1467, Scottsdale, Arizona 85252
 28. Jun 3 Gil Neiger, Box 4293, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island 02912
 29. Jun 21 Ed Kollmer, Box 2, Great Barrington, Massachusetts 01230
 30. Jul John Lovibond, 1 Oak Lea Ave., Fulshaw Park, Wilmslow, Cheshire, U.K. SK9 1QL
 31. Jul 20 Dave Kadlecek, 833 Loring Ave., Crockett, California 94525
 32. Jul 27 Randolph Smyth, 249 First Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1S 2G5
 33. Aug 25 Mike Kershaw, 238 N. Bowling Green Way, Los Angeles, California 90049
 34. Sep 10 Bob Hartwig, 5030 N. 109th St., Longmont, Colorado 80501
 35. Sep 11 Robert Sacks, 4861 Broadway, Apt. 5-V, New York, New York 10034
 36. Oct Tony Watson, 201 Minnesota, Las Vegas, Nevada 89107
 37. Oct 27 Larry M. Fong, P.O. Box 11090, Oakland, California 94611
 38. Nov 1 Peter Birks, Darwin College, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent, U.K.
 39. Nov 5 David Head, Box 1231, Huntsville, Ontario, Canada P0A 1K0
 40. Dec Greg Costikyan, P.O. Box 865, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island 02912
 41. Dec Laurence Gillespie, 23 Robert Allen Dr., Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3M 3G9

1975

42. Jan Walter Luc Haas, Postfach 7, CH-4024, Basel 24, Switzerland
 43. Feb 7 Richard Kovalcik, Bexley Hall #205, 50 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02139
 44. Feb 8 Ake E.B. Jonsson, Gruvvagen 26, S-981 00 Kiruna, Sweden
 45. Mar Russell Fox, 5160 Donna Ave., Tarzana, California 91356
 46. Apr 1 Roger Oliver, P.O. Box 452, Denville, New Jersey 07834
 47. May 14 Ben Grossman, 29 E. 9th St., #9, New York, New York 10003
 48. Jun 13 Clive Booth, 71 Clara Mount Rd., Langley, Heanor, Derbyshire, U.K. DE7 7HS
 49. Jun 13 Graham Mills, 236 Brooklands Rd., Weybridge, Surrey, U.K.
 50. Jun 29 Brad Hessel, 232 W. 24th St., #5R, New York, New York 10011
 51. Jul Robert Goldman, 200 Old Army Rd., Scarsdale, New York 10583
 52. Jul Stephen Pratt, 15 Craneford Close, Twickenham, Middlesex, U.K. TW2 7SD
 53. Jul 11 Cal White, 1 Turnberry Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6N 1P6
 54. Aug Andy Evans, 36 Brynmill Terrace, Brynmill, Swansea, U.K. SA2 0BA
 55. Aug Peter Mearns, 10 Moy Terrace, Inverness, Scotland, U.K.
 56. Sep Roy Taylor, 63A St. Nicolas Park Dr., Nuneaton, Warks, U.K. CV11 6DZ
 57. Nov Larry Dunning, 46 Holmesdale Rd., West Midland 6056, West Australia
 58. Nov Paul Simpkins, 104 Combs Hill, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, U.K. WF12 0LQ
 59. Dec Dennis Agosta, 14 Shadyside Ave., Dumont, New Jersey 07628
 60. Dec Ron Rayner, 32 Wentworth Ave., West Finchley, London, U.K. N3 1YL

1976

61. Jan Drew McGee, 100 Belmont Pl., Apt 6-J, Staten Island, New York 10301
 62. Jan Paul Willey, 31 Burstow Rd., Wimbledon, London, U.K. SW20 8ST
 63. Feb 7 Robert Sergeant, 3242 Lupine Dr., Indianapolis, Indiana 46224
 64. Feb 28 John Malay, c/o Chatham Arts, 12 Commerce St., Chatham, New Jersey 07928
 65. Apr 8 Alan Rowland, 52 8th Ave., Westwood, New Jersey 07675
 66. Jul 1 Donald Wileman, 98 Sanderling Cres., Lindsay, Ontario, Canada K9V 4N2
 67. Jul 3 Clifford A. Mann II, 823 Marcy Ave., Apt. 101, Oxon Hill, Maryland 20021
 68. Aug Bob Brown, 53 Broadwood Dr., Fulwood, Preston, Lancs, U.K. PR2 4SS
 69. Aug Ron Canham, 93 Mortlake Rd., Kew, Richmond, Surrey, U.K. TW9 4AA
 70. Aug 18 Ken St. Andre, 3421 E. Yale, Phoenix, Arizona 85008
 71. Nov W. Elmer Hinton Jr., 20 Almont St., Nashua, New Hampshire 03060
 72. Nov 20 Bob Beardsley, 17 Moryan Rd., Edison, New Jersey 08817

1977

73. Jan Daniel Palter, P.O. Box 72, Cedarhurst, New York 11516
 74. Feb Richard Hucknall, 124 Southcliffe Rd., Carlton, Nottingham, U.K. NG4 1ES
 75. Feb 9 Steve McLendon, Box 57066, Webster, Texas 77598
 76. Feb 14 Dick Trtek, 2728 S.E. Main, Apt. 1, Portland, Oregon 97214
 77. Mar Steve Doubleday, 16 Somerton's Close, Guildford, Surrey, U.K.
 78. Mar James Peters, 5004 N. 68th Dr., Glendale, Arizona 85303
 79. Mar 30 Tony Crouch, 35 Melbourne Ave., West Ealing, London W13, U.K.
 80. May Bob Fabry, 8034 N. Ozark, Niles, Illinois 60648
 81. May Steve Heinowski, 1630 W. 28th St., Lorain, Ohio 44052

82. Jun Hartmut Halfmeier, Stapelstrasse 13, D-2000 Hamburg 54, West Germany
 83. Jun Robert Markham, 38 Knollwood Dr., Bethel, Connecticut 06801
 84. Jun George Parkanyi, 158B McArthur Ave., #1608, Vanier, Ontario, Canada K1L 8C9
 85. Jun 1 David Bunke, 5512 Julmar Dr., Cincinnati, Ohio 45238
 86. Jun 22 Andy Cook, 807 Crescent Dr., Alexandria, Virginia 22302
 87. Jul Mark Berch, 492 Naylor Pl., Alexandria, Virginia 22304
 88. Jul Thomas Gould, 40 W. 77th St., New York, New York 10024
 89. Aug Jerry H. Jones, 1854 Wagner St., Pasadena, California 91107
 90. Sep 14 Iain Forsythe, 6 Ardrossan Rd., Saltcoats, Ayrshire, Scotland, U.K.
 91. Oct Julian Boggess, Star Route, Box 220-6, Columbus, Mississippi 39701
 92. Oct 8 John Brennick, 192 Curtis Ave., Stoughton, Massachusetts 02072
 93. Nov John Michalski, 913 N.E. 6th St., Moore, Oklahoma 73160
 94. Nov Craig A. Reges, 16 W 761 White Pines Rd., Bensenville, Illinois 60106
 95. Nov 10 Neil McDonald, Durweston House, Durweston, Blandford Forum Dorset, U.K. DT11 0QA
 96. Dec 1 Henry Kelley, 6721 6th Ave. N.W., Seattle, Washington 98117

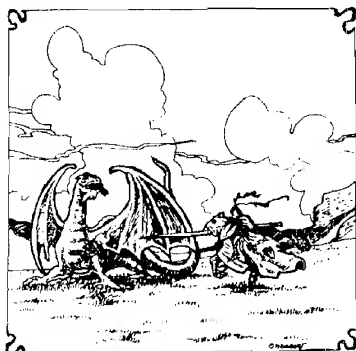
1978

97. Jan Dave Watts, "Rostherne", 102 Priory Rd., Milford Haven, Dyfed, U.K. SA73 2ED
 98. Feb 17 Bernie Oaklyn, 13412 Brackley Terrace, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904
 99. Mar J. Richard Jarvinen, 330 Madison, Astoria, Oregon 97103
 100. Mar Troy Snyder, 1507 S. 1st St., Kirksville, Missouri 63501
 101. Mar 17 Chris Tringham, 25 Auckland Rd., London, U.K. SE19 2DR
 102. Apr Lee Kendter, 4347 Benner St., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19135

- (1) 1 Apr 65 - 15 Oct 66, 17 Feb 68 - 11 Jan 75, 11 Mar 76 - present
 (2) Dec 67 - Aug 68, 13 Dec 72 - present
 (3) 31 Jan 72 - 12 Mar 74, Jul 75 - present
 (4) 20 Dec 73 - 26 Aug 75, 20 Apr 77 - present

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FUGUE

by "PARIAN"

"Oh, to be in England, now that April's there...." Certainly England is one of the more enjoyable countries to start off with in a game of Diplomacy. Lots of water to protect you (mostly from those nasty Frogs - the Krauts are generally on your side, as they were historically) and a perfect balance of fleets and armies to keep the dogs at bay. Why, as John Bull, I've lasted as long as '03 and '04 (and even once to Spring '04, but there were extenuating circumstances - everybody, the Gamesmaster and myself included, had forgotten that I still controlled Serbia).

Much analysis has been done concerning proper British play in the opening years. (Fortunately, I rarely have to concern myself with the middle- and end-game.) These articles, however, have been concerned with such nebulous and vague matters as Germany's dining habits, does Russia remember that I have stabbed him for the past fourteen consecutive games?, and other intangibles. Obviously some serious, precise mathematical dissection is required. I have spent the last twelve years of my waking life perfecting a mathematical formula that will yield the optimum move for any given country. This momentous finding I will now share with you:

$$M_i = n \cdot \frac{f(x)}{R} + e^x \sqrt{-1} \cdot \left(\frac{2 \cdot f}{3 - 2r} \right)$$

M_i (where i varies from 1 to 3) is the summation of the potential values for each of your starting pieces. n is the number of opponents who have shown definite animosity toward you prior to Spring '01 (generally I find this number to be around 1, but an n -value of 2 is not uncommon). $f(x)$, or $F(x)$ if you will, is simply the area, in square hectares, of all adjoining regions to your home country; e^x is obvious, as is $\sqrt{-1}$. R requires more explanation, while r is nothing more than the distance from your capital to the exact center of the board (somewhere in the region of the Suppits).

This concise, accurate formula can be ap-

plied to any country; when we use it for England, the subject of our discussion, the result comes out to - oh, yes, I forgot to divide the entire function by p (or was it q ? - no matter, p is good enough). Anyway, the result is 4.29, certainly an astounding figure. I would have expected no more than 3.56, or possibly even 3.57, but my God, 4.29! Truly incredible. From this value, the translation into the English opening move is superficial:

F Edi-Cly.

F Lon-Yor.

A Lvp-Wal.

While the implications of such a move are staggering, I should perhaps explain some of the subtleties involved for the less skillful of my readers. While A Lvp-Wal might be construed as threatening to the French player, you can point out that the two fleet moves are favorable to him. The element of surprise can also be a very powerful tool. When playing this opening face-to-face, the entire table is often reduced to a stunned silence. At other times, some players have been overcome by tears (carefully disguised by peals of laughter to prevent their real fears from showing). However, the true impact of this opening move is not revealed until the Fall of '01, when the following move is indicated:

F Cly-Lvp.

F Yor-Edi.

A Wal-Lon.

The English play has come full circle. Not only are all supply centers adequately protected, the single army unit is stationed in London, erasing forever the perennial problem of what to do with your army in Liverpool. While others have been madly scrambling about for loose supply centers, you alone have kept your house in order, while at the same time have offended no one (well, I once irritated France to the point of apoplexy when I accidentally knocked his only bottle of Mouton-Rothschild '59 over Gascony, Spain, Portugal and a good portion of his tweeds, but that's just a chance you'll have to take). After establishing a powerful position as demonstrated, the remainder of the game is but a matter of technique.

The one pitfall of this innovative opening is that it precludes one of my personal favorites: F Edi-Yor, F Lon-Yor and A Lvp-Yor, affectionately known as "Yorkshire Pudding." While this does have much of the element of surprise, it is sadly lacking in subtlety. However, against weaker or invalidated opponents it can be utilized with effect.

Armed with the above analysis, I have no doubt that your place in the final standings of future games will change dramatically. For this you may gratefully thank

- PARIAN

THE I.D.A. IS

ALIVE & WELL

by DAVID J. BUNKE

The IDA is alive and recovering!

It would be a point-blank denial of reality to state that the International Diplomacy Association of North America has not had problems over the past few years. When I entered this hobby over two years ago, I was just in time to witness the organization's decline. A combination of ineffective leadership coupled with in-fighting among the council members succeeded in driving membership levels to all-time lows. The term "hobby politics" eventually became synonymous with petty squabbling and inaction. The situation actually deteriorated to such a degree that last year one council member was holding down the jobs of three - his own plus those of two members who dropped from sight. I am proud to say that the IDA has survived all this and is now on the road to recovery.

In February 1978 a new General Council of the IDA was voted into existence. Since then we have been hard at work pumping life into a rather deflated group. Thus far our major emphasis has not been on new innovations or programs, but on restoring confidence and renewing faith in an organization which does have a place in this growing hobby. As a central part of this, the IDA's essential role as a service organization has been taken up with a new resolve. The subsidies of the Boardman and Miller Numbers, which lapsed last year, have been reinstated. Diplomacy Review, the official newsletter of the IDA, is now being produced with new high standards of regularity and quality. And, perhaps most importantly, memberships in the IDA for non-North Americans have been reopened.

Projects currently under way include the 1977-78 Diplomacy Players' Census, a Novice Handbook, and a comprehensive history of the hobby. Jerry Jones, in addition to his work as Periodicals Editor, is also laboring for new levels of cooperation between magazine publishers as head of the recently-created Office of Publisher Relations. And Fred Davis is coming onto the scene as the IDA's representative to the Diplomacy Variant Commission.

Future plans include a reworking of the IDA election and voting procedures, the establishment of criteria for the Diplomacy Conven-

tion Site Selection Committee, and the production of a Novice Guide in conjunction with Rod Walker and his work for Avalon-Hill.

The result of all this is that the International Diplomacy Association is once again a visible and active facet of this hobby. Memberships are on the rise, and the number of people willing to work for cooperation among hobby members is also growing. I am in hopes, too, that this article will succeed in reaching a number of people who are interested in offering a bit of their time and know-how to the IDA. The group deserves and needs your support.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the IDA, simply send your \$2.00 in annual dues to Bob Hartwig, Jr., 5030 N. 109th St., Longmont, Colorado 80501, USA. Overseas memberships are available for \$5.00 per year, and this includes the delivery of Diplomacy Review by air mail.

As I said, the IDA needs your help and cooperation. Please feel free to offer any suggestions or ideas which you believe will be of help to us. This is your organization, so let's put it solidly on the road to recovery.

((DIPLOMACY WORLD and the IDA have had a checkered relationship. When DW originally began, it was with staunch IDA support and included a system of subsidy and subscription discounts. Both IDA and DW outgrew those days, but the relationship remained warm for a long time - and mutually profitable, I might remind. Then the IDA's Dark Ages began, the closeness was strained, and finally the new DW editor, in a fit of frustration, broke the relationship altogether and ceased to recognize the then-absurd existence of IDA at all.

((But things have changed again, thank God. I am persuaded now that the "new" IDA - we have had a lot of "new" IDAs, but this one has proved that the term is justified - is again well worth supporting. Accordingly, IDA is welcomed again into the pages of DW. And the Editor of DW, who not too terribly long ago would have choked on such an assertion, is pleased to offer his wholehearted endorsement to all readers that they join and support the group. In fact, said Editor is going to stop typing right now long enough to send in his own membership.))

URGENT!

If you are a subscriber, look at the mailing label on the envelope for this issue. There is a number in the corner. If the number matches this issue number, YOUR SUBSCRIPTION HAS JUST EXPIRED! We sincerely hope these issues have been pleasing you, and we look forward to receiving your renewal. Thanks.

THE PLAY OF ITALY

by MARK PERCH

I have a certain rueful affection for Italy, as I was stuck with the country in three of my first four postal games. One must start with this hard fact: Italy is the most difficult of the powers to win with. It has significantly fewer victories in postal games than any other country, and that has not changed since the beginnings of postal Diplomacy. Italy has many handicaps. For example, although it is, as Gruen recognizes, more a naval than a land power, it begins with only one fleet, and its central sea areas (Tyrrhenian and Ionian) have far less scope than England's North Sea and English Channel. But it is best not to become obsessed with Italy's problems, but focus instead on applying diplomacy to its strengths. Italy's main asset in 1901 is strategic flexibility - more than any other country it can be heavily involved in either the eastern or western sectors. The active diplomat can thus solicit the best offer from either sector, giving him a wider field of choice than, say, the French or Turkish players. Theoretically, Italy should receive the most offers. This variety of choices is a precious asset which should not be squandered by beginning the game with preconceived notions.

Quite the opposite view is expressed in Adam Gruen's "Italy: I Came, I Saw...." (DW 18). He begins by immediately dismissing Italy's most aggressive western involvement: "Italy should realize right off the bat that attacking France in 1901 is a useless gesture which will limit potential later on." This is horrible advice to give to a beginner. Such an attack can be quite rewarding, especially if Russia and Austria are allied against Turkey. I direct Gruen's attention to postal game 1974GR (GRAU-STARK) which began with an Italian attack on France in 1901 and ended with a spectacular Italian victory in 1907.

Next, Gruen looks at the western England/France/Germany triangle, with an eye toward determining which diplomatic configuration is best for Italy. Three of the four major possibilities are discussed in some detail. (The deadly triple alliance is ignored.) He quickly disposes of F/G v. E: "A Franco-German alliance is bad for Italian interests." A second choice, E/G v. F, is likewise bad, because it presents Italy with two unpalatable choices: "Help France or stab her." Doing the former will "incense the English and the Germans to a degree that...Italy will be the next target." However, doing the former means that Italy has the "plug pulled," so that "there is nothing to stop England and Germany from attacking Italy next." It is only with E/F v. G that Gruen warms, suggesting that Italy "ignore the whole thing" and keep a non-aggression pact with France, a result which is "probably the best thing that could happen for Italy early in the game." (The other choice, attacking France, is not discussed, but as it sets up a two-on-two, E/F v. G/I, it can't be considered very productive.)

Thus, Gruen's recommendation of the best setup for Italy calls for E/F to destroy Germany. In my own opinion, this is quite wrong. The reason for this lies in the mid-game, an aspect that Gruen gives only superficial attention to. A healthy Germany is the best possible ally for Italy in mid-game. Regardless of which country or alliance arises from the R/A/T triangle to dominate the east (except for A/T, in which case you're probably doomed), Germany is the best western ally to help you push them back. France is too far away. England could help, but will usually be so remote that joint military action will be difficult. More seriously, there will be a strong temptation on England's part to garrison his Scandinavian holdings, wait until you are fully turned to the east to face the attack, and then take you in the rear with his fleets. Germany can easily help you and will likely feel threatened around the same time you do by the eastern colossus. The situation is the same in the west, though less dramatically. Russia is only a second choice, and may not at all feel threatened by a strong France. Germany is the perfect ally against a France that has swallowed England, or vice-versa. Further, mid-game alliances with Germany allow Italy to use Switzerland as an asset, rather than its usual role as a liability. Finally, note that it is quite easy for Italy and Germany to cooperate on both eastern and western fronts. This is a particularly strong type of alliance, as it is more difficult to be massively stabbed. Further, if circumstances require an uneven division of spoils in one area, this can be evened in the other. There are other advantages, but I believe I've made my point. Italy can of course live with the early destruction of Germany at

the hands of E/F, but this is not desirable.

If you involve yourself in the east, my own preference is for F/G v. E. This has the obvious advantage of eliminating your most serious naval rival. Even more important, it moves those French fleets away from you. This is most important - the army border with France is narrow and easily blocked. Once those fleets are north, France should be quite reluctant to swing them around, since it will be so long before they can take an Italian target. The F/G alliance will almost certainly split the English home centers, an inherently unstable situation. Be sure to point out to both sides that no western stalemate line is possible without total control of the British Isles. If France builds an army, don't forget to point out to Germany how it won't be used against Italy. Once French-German war breaks out, you have the delightful choice of either hitting France in his lightly-defended southern underbelly, or continuing to pour all your forces into the east.

Before turning east, I'd like to take up Gruen's tabulation of the "standard openings for Italy" in Spring 1901. It's a sorry lot. Under Anti-French Openings (and also mentioned in the article) is "Plan Milan: A Ven H, A Rom-Tus, F Nap-Ion." If you're France and consider this ultra-timid opening hostile, then I'm afraid you may be a little to paranoid for this game. Another pointless opening is "Plan Turin: A Ven-Pie, A Rom-Tus, F Nap-Ion." Novices should not be misled; these are extremely obscure openings. Mick Bullock of the U.K. accumulated statistics on 313 Italian openings in British games, and he lists exactly two games for Milan, two for Turin and five for Plan Tunis, another peculiar opening listed. On the other hand, A Ven-Pie, A Rom-Ven, F Nap-Ion, which is the third most common Italian opening, just doesn't appear at all! Also missing is the most aggressively anti-French "Western Lepanto," which begins A Ven-Pie, A Rom-Tus or H, F Nap-Tyn, preparing for a convoy to Tunis. Another missing opening is the "Superpower" opening, A Ven-Tyo, A Rom-Apu, F Nap-Ion, generally considered to be the closest form of Italian/Austrian cooperation against a Russian/Turkish alliance. Instead of these important openings we get, as in the article on England several issues ago, a lot of junk.

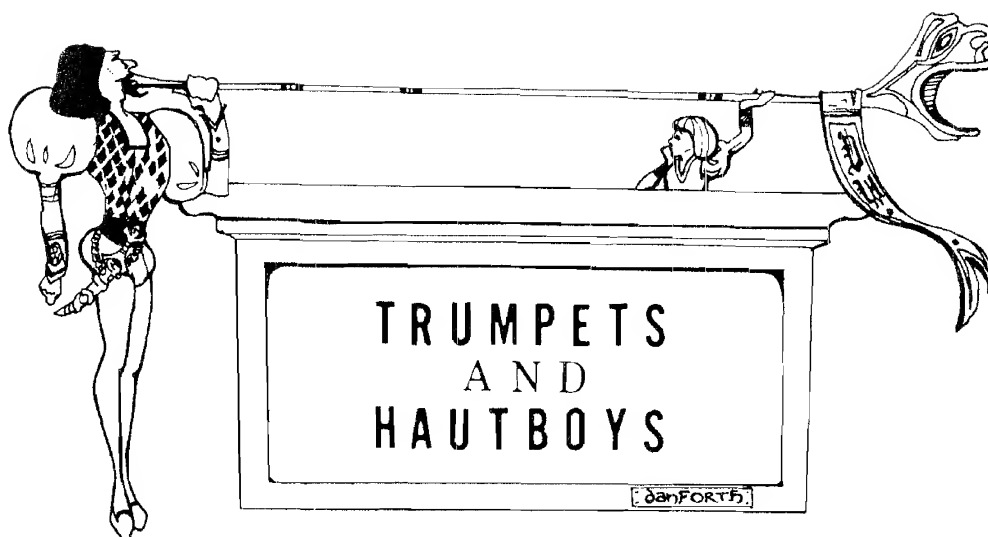
Moving to the east, Gruen's discussion is such a morass of confusion, repetition and downright error that in the interests of space only two topics will be considered: The two attacks on Turkey, as that is what Gruen considers Italy's best option.

The Fall 1901 moves given for both Italy and Austria for the Key Opening are factually incorrect. Italy does not dawdle with F Ion-Tun to pick up a second build which he should not need. He plunges directly into Turkish waters (Aeg or Eas). With no Austrian F Gre

in Winter 1901 it is necessary to put immediate pressure on the south with the Italian fleet. As for "A Bud H," if Turkey does A Bud-Ser, blocking Italy's A Tri-Ser, then Austria will get no builds. Correct is A Bud S ITA A Tri-Ser. Skeptics can write me for a copy of Jeff Key's original article, or can check on two famous Key Opening games, postal games 1974DX and 1972DE, or ask someone who heard Edi Birsan's delightful talk on the subject at the Origins II convention. ((Or ask the editor of DIPLOMACY WORLD, who used it most notably with Jeff Key himself at Dipcon '73.))

Compounding the confusion is the inexplicable use of the very similar-sounding "Plan Key" for a different opening (A Rom-Apu per Gruen's table, then A Apu-Alb per Page 31, Col. 2). This is bound to cause confusion, and indeed Gruen himself appears confused - the Page 31, Col. 1 discussion of the Key opening is mislabeled as "Plan Key." Finally, the most important decision that Italy must make in the Key Opening was totally ignored by Gruen: Should it be used (in the Fall) against Austria or Turkey? This opening is an excellent way to set up Austria, particularly an Austria in trouble with Russia or Turkey.

Second, there is Gruen's disjoint treatment of the Lepanto. The discussion begins in the middle of Paragraph 3 of "Theme 2," a paragraph which starts with a discussion of an unrelated opening. Spring 1901 moves are given, along with three choices for Fall 1901 moves, only one of which would normally be considered a Lepanto. In the next paragraph he wanders off to discuss a different opening, returning in the following paragraph to the Lepanto, where the Winter 1901 and 1902 moves are listed. The discussion then breaks off, and continues two columns later on Page 31, where the missing Fall 1901 moves are finally given, followed by a repetition of the 1902 moves, plus suggestions for 1903. In addition to this splintered tactical material, exactly one (1) sentence is devoted to strategic and diplomatic considerations: "This attack can only work with Austrian assistance, with a chance of success if Russia helps." The first part is certainly true, but the second part is, in my view, not. Russian participation is undesirable. If he joins in, he'll presumably want Ankara at the least as his share of the spoils. This leaves you and Austria to squabble over who gets Constantinople. If you get only one center, then the risks you've taken from this attack are not commensurate with the gains. Even if you get Con., you are very vulnerable to an A/R alliance, with Russian pieces in the Black and Ankara, and Austria in Bulgaria and possibly Aegean as well. The novice should also note that in Spring 1902, the Lepanto can be used against Austria just as well, for example, with a convoy to Albania or Greece, and F Nap-Apu.



1. DipCon '78 is almost on us. It will be held this year in the San Fernando Valley near Los Angeles, California, in conjunction with GLASC-III (Greater Los Angeles Simulations Convention) on June 29 and 30, and July 1. There will be tournaments for many different games (including Diplomacy), seminars and discussions, lots of socializing, chances to play a nearly infinite variety of games with or without trophies awarded, dealer displays, exhibitions and demonstrations of new ideas and products - all the joyous things gaming conventions usually have, in a pleasant and well-organized atmosphere. If you're not already committed to attending, make plans now; it won't be long by the time you see this. Further information can be got from Russell Fox, 5160 Donna Ave., Tarzana, CA 91356.

2. People with orphan games problems take note: James B. Thomas, 1145 Oakheath Drive, Harbor City, CA 90710, has written us a letter stating he will be willing to take on up to four orphans and run them out by photocopy, with no required fees (voluntary contributions gladly accepted to offset postage). If you wish, you can write to the editor of DW and he will sort things out in advance (if possible), passing the material over to Jim when ready to go.

3. The Second Annual North American Postal Magazine Poll is under way, and we urge every postal player to participate so the results will be useful and meaningful. The poll is open until the end of June, so please do this now! Simply list, on a sheet of paper, the names of all North American postal Diplomacy magazines you receive, and rate each one from 1 to 10 (1 = bad, 10 = good). Secondly, list all gamesmasters under whose tutelage you are currently playing, and give each a similar 1-10 rating. Then send the sheet to John Leeder, 1211 5th St. N.W., Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2M 3B6. Results

of the full poll will appear in DW as soon as possible.

4. Do you ever wonder where the participants in the recent IDA/NA controversy have disappeared to? Many of them have gone to Slobbovia. Johann Cardinal Gambolputty (Greg Costikyan) lost the election for Grand Patriarch because Tostig Cardinal Zhukoski (Bruce Schlickbernd) miscounted the votes. The Apfelmous family (Ben Grossman) have regained Brandysle with assistance from Cambrecis Novibazaar (Don Wileman). Ra-Man Cronkevitch (Ray Heuer) has retired as Czar of All the Slobbovias and is now President of the Regency and Privy Council, Lord of the Isles, and Chief of the Slobbovian Imperial General Staff. Jacques Schramitof (Bob Lipton), having betrayed the last two Czars and at least two would-be Czars, is continuing in the same manner. Aleksandr Doyouski (Roger Oliver) is up for election as Lord Chief Justice. Yokab ban Yokab, Istni (Robert Sacks) is, as usual, administering the Council of Regency, H.I.M.'s Privy Council, the Imperial Duma, the Senate of the College of Justice, and the Order of the Isles. Princepa Svartz Tarnkap (Steven Tihor) has been restored to the good graces of his younger, next younger, or twenty-first younger brother, the Kaiser of the Wiking Peoples - I never could get that straight. If you're interested, send a couple of dollars for a sample issue (at 1¢ per page plus postage, it's cheap) to Raymond Heuer, 162-10 87th Road, Jamaica, NY 11432 - publishers enquire about special provisions.

5. Back for a moment to Item 1 (DipCon) - is anybody who is going to attend interested in handling the job of DipCon photographer? Needed is someone with good equipment who will agree to take his choice of shots of the Diplomacy-related activities at the convention, and supply copies to the Diplomacy Archives (costs reimbursed) for preservation. Shots of general hobby interest may also appear in DW. If intrigued,

advise Walter Buchanan, RR 3, Box 324, Lebanon, IN 46052.

6. The current DW Demonstration Game is on its last legs, and it will soon be time to start again. Next time, as you know, there will be two games going simultaneously, with separate analyses by qualified commentators. One game will come out of England, managed and discussed by Richard Sharp - Richard, now's the time to assemble your field at the starting gate. The other game will be in North America, run by Walt Buchanan as usual, and analyzed by an as yet undetermined party. Experienced and generally successful postal players are preferred. Walt reserves the right to arbitrary selection of the field from the applications sent. The fee (for Walt's game only) is \$25.00 per player, which will include entry, copies of Hoosier Archives as published, a sub to DW, and - if you win - the usual game trophy. If you're game (heh heh), write Walt Buchanan, address in Item 5 above.

7. More from Buchanan land. As of March 28, 1978, John Leeder's magazine Runestone became the third postal Diplomacy magazine to creep over the 200-issue plateau (the others are Graustark, 1/3/70, and Hoosier Archives, 9/11/76).

8. We are informed that you can obtain, as long as the supply remains (there are about 50 on hand), one of the older fold-in-half type Diplomacy boards (made by Games Research), for \$2.00 each - if by some chance anybody wants the entire batch, they'll go for a mere \$1.50 per. Also available are the exotic metal pieces in the shapes of ships and tanks, which were once specially produced to liven up the game and get rid of the boring wooden and plastic stock pieces. These run \$7.00 per set. All this is from Charles R. Anshell, 1226 N. Rossell Ave., Oak Park, IL 60302, USA.

9. From time to time we mention in these pages the name of Mick Bullock, the Diplomacy statistician, gamesmaster, and nice guy of the United Kingdom. (Mick publishes The New Statsman, the finest statistical magazine yet produced in this hobby.) Well, if you're thinking of writing Mick for anything, you might want to have his new address: 36 Greenroyd, Green Lane, West Vale, Halifax, West Yorkshire, U.K. That ought to fill the whole bloody envelope!

10. Double plug time. Two new magazines, excellent by reputation and early evidence, are out in England. First is Megalomania, from Chris Tringham, 25 Auckland Road, London SE19 2DR. Monthly, with game openings in regular Diplomacy and a number of variants at reasonable fees. Chris also indicates an interest in lots of readership material (letters, etc.) and will offer free issues for contributions used. Photo-offset. Sub rate (by sea) 9 issues for \$3.00. Enquire for air rates and/or game fees.

And then we have Whiskey Mac, from Paul Openshaw, 4 Beechmont Gardens, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, UK. Also offset, also running games on

monthly intervals, also interested in readership material - gee, to me it seems as if I'm giving two plugs for the same thing! Well, that's not true, of course; editorial individuality is a thing that cannot be described. What you ought to do is send both people some money for a sub, see if you like the products, and then maybe join a game or write a letter or two. (Games from the United Kingdom work reasonably well with four-week deadlines or greater, as long as you're prompt in your replies to things.)

11. One of the least-known, yet best postal journals currently available is Randolph Smyth's Fol Si Fie, which has just gone over its 100th issue (!) and is still roaring along. Printed by spirit duplicator (a little messy at times), but excellently written and lots of fun to read, with game openings at a \$3. fee plus sub (three issues for \$1) - preference list of countries with application please. That's a per-game average cost of \$13., a good value considering the reputation and reliability of this publisher. In fact - not to detract from anybody - I think if I were a novice looking for a new game, and having the problems Russ Vandercook mentioned in the last DW letter column, I'd write first to Randolph.

12. And second (only because he's published eight or nine fewer issues) would be Don Horton, 16 Jordan Ct., Sacramento, CA 95826, whose Claw and Fang has become a byword for excellent gaming in America. Don uses guest gamesmasters, but keeps tight watch on them, so your game is very safe. Fees - \$3. per game, plus subscription at 6/\$2. (Same rate as Smyth.) Plenty of readership material, too.

13. Now let me see here - this next magazine in my review stack has a cover that calls it The Bullus Brutetin, and has one of the most grotesque cartoons I've ever seen staring me in the face. Well, now, I happen to know that the magazine is actually called Brutus Bulletin, but the slightly revised title isn't far off either when you consider what a godawful physical impossibility is portrayed in that drawing - ah, but it says here there are no game openings. Gee, that may put a lot of you off, eh? Too bad. If you don't subscribe, you'll miss one hell of a lot of hilarity and good reading. Get on board; there'll be game openings again, and meanwhile you can chuckle away to your heart's content. (Some of what it published isn't funny, merely interesting.) Sub rate - good question; try sending \$1.50 for all issues remaining in 1978. To John Michalski, 913 N.E. 6th St., Moore, OK 73160, USA.

14. Now, readers, you are about to learn (if you hadn't already) about the DW Editor's Personal Bias (Diplomacy Magazine Division). Said Editor prefers magazines that have something in them worth reading. He prefers laughs. He prefers the sort of magazine that gives much pleasure consistently, even if you just got

annihilated in your Diplomacy moves. That's why the plugs in this column are substantially more enthusiastic for such magazines. And that's why this introduction is appropriate for J. Richard Jarvinen's Non Sequitur, which he supplies from 2404 Sunset Avenue, West Linn, OR 97068, USA. He'll send you a free sample so you can decide for yourself, and then you can read the rates for yourself and I won't have to bother here.

15. A more comprehensive magazine than most, in terms of games being run, is The Ninth Circle, from David J. Bunke, 5512 Julmar Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45238, USA. Diplomacy is open, of course, but so are many other games of a wide variety of types. There's also a good deal to read here, too. Rates: Game fee \$2 plus sub (10/\$3.50). This is not so much a reader's magazine as a general gamer's affair, since most of the material discusses various games in much detail. Diplomacy, however, seems to be the number one interest. Well worth it.

16. Now here's a magazine I normally would ignore. There's just one problem; if what you want is a reliable and well-established game magazine, and damn the frills, then there are none better. That's the problem with personal biases; one occasionally overlooks something that shouldn't have been passed by. If your interest is in playing a competently-run, quick (2-week) game, you want Liberterrean, from Jim Bumpas, 948 Loraine Ave., Los Altos, CA 94022, USA. Sub rate \$3/10. Game fee not specified, but Jim says he replies to all inquiries whether or not he has an opening at the time, so you might inquire. Many other games are played here too.

17. At the rate things have been going, every issue of this column is somewhere going to include a plug for Mark Berch's Diplomacy Digest. This is an article magazine, mainly reprinted material from magazines not readily available to everybody; Mark has excellent taste in selections and does a nice job of putting his material together. No games are run; this is for readers and game students only. 10/\$2.50 is the rate. The latest issue includes (ahem) a bit about me, and one of the more brilliant hoaxes I cooked up a few years ago. (The fake Moeshoeshoe fanzine was the best ever, though.) The Digest can be yours, and ought to be, from Mark Berch, 492 Naylor Place, Alexandria, VA 22304, USA.

18. An old-time magazine has just put in a reappearance, and under circumstances which require us to issue a warning. The magazine is La Guerre, formerly run by one Buddy Tretick of the Washington, D.C., area, now published by a "Bernie Oaklyn." There is a good deal of mystery around this situation; substantial evidence exists, though Mr. Tretick denies it, that Oaklyn and Tretick are the same person. One thing is certain (and Tretick

does admit this); one person or two, Oaklyn and Tretick are closely associated. And this means that we feel the hobby ought to be aware and informed of the past history of La Guerre in its older guise. Buddy Tretick was generally acknowledged to be one of the worst gamesmasters in postal history; reams of uncorrected or ignored errors, "losing" players, missing issues, grossly erratic schedules, and general sloppiness were the rule. Worst of all in our opinion, Tretick was the only gamesmaster in the history of the hobby to abandon games in progress and yet continue to publish and start new games! Now, maybe things have changed. After all, there are plenty of reputable people in this hobby (the editor of DW included) who have done such things as folding a magazine only to reappear later. But most such people make efforts to clean up their debts and straighten out their reputations. Tretick has not done. Until we have substantial proof that there is a "new era" of La Guerre at hand, DIPLOMACY WORLD feels compelled to warn you to stay as far away as possible from Tretick, Oaklyn, and their games.

19. The big news this month for Diplomacy gamers of all types is that Avalon-Hill is just about to publish a Diplomacy Handbook. Written by Rod Walker, easily the best writer this hobby has ever produced, it will be similar to A-H's other handbooks: 36 pages, photo-reduced offset, magazine size and format. The cost will be \$3.00. The Handbook will cover virtually every aspect of the game and the hobbies which have grown up around it: Tactics and strategy in general and for all seven countries in depth; Clubs and in-person play; The postal hobby; Origins and development of the game from its invention to date - you name it, it's there. Though smaller and cheaper, it's far superior to other such products recently on the market. Publication will occur any time now; we'll announce when it's out, and offer reviews of the finished product.

20. We must repeat an earlier request, inasmuch as response has been limited: The management of DIPLOMACY WORLD desperately needs ideas for cover drawings and/or cartoons. If you have any ideas at all, describe them and our artist will realize them. (If you draw, you're welcome to send finished products too.) Our last plea brought exactly one idea (which will be used soon, Dave) and, though not precisely desperate, we're getting hungry. **HELP!**

21. In a vein similar to the above, you who are present or recent novices can help us too. We now have a Novice Corner, written by your Editor. However, Conrad hasn't been a novice in this game for fifteen years, and is having trouble knowing for sure what subjects you would most like to see covered. Strategy and tactics excluded, please send your ideas, problems, hobby gripes, comments, suggestions, and whatever else.

TRIVIA QUIZ

by ROD WALKER

Here is a chance to get a free one-year extension to your current DIPLOMACY WORLD subscription. We have here a contest - one in a series, as things of this type will now become a regular DIPLOMACY WORLD feature - dealing with trivia; not modern trivia, but some dealing with the period of the game of Diplomacy.

Modern trivia tend to deal with television, the movies and sports. At the beginning of this century, however, trivial knowledge centered around different subjects: primarily history, literature and religion.

Diplomacy begins in 1901. The boundaries of the map are, however, roughly those of 1913. The outlook of the game, which revolves around the balance of power, is taken from the English viewpoint, an attitude toward the antebellum imperialist world which Americans inherited from their English cousins.

The contest, therefore, is concerned with obscure facts which would have been available to a well-read English gentleman during the period between the death of Victoria and the outbreak of World War I. There are a round dozen questions, each of them worth a number of points. The worth of each question, or of each of its parts, will be indicated in parentheses.

The prize, as already indicated, is a one-year free extension of your DIPLOMACY WORLD subscription. If you are now not a subscriber, we will enter a new sub for you if you win. If you receive the magazine in trade, the free sub is yours to dispose of as you please - you might, for instance, wish to offer it as a prize in a contest in your own magazine. In case of a tie between two, duplicate prizes will be awarded; if the "tie" is among three or more, there will be a tie-breaker.

Deadline for receipt of completed entries is August 1, 1978. Please send them to the quiz author, Rodney C. Walker, at the following address:

"Alcala"
1273 Crest Drive
Encinitas, CA 92024, USA

The questions:

1. Consider the following quotation: "Non amo te, Zabidi, nec possum dicere quare; Hoc tantum possum dicere non amo te."
 - a. Cite author (5 points) and source (5).
 - b. What is the most famous English translation of that quote (10)?
 - c. Who wrote the translation (10)?
2. We have all heard the familiar catchphrase (pun intended), "a fly in the ointment."

Where does that phrase originally come from (20)?

3. Despite the fact that the names for all other devils (Satan, Belial, Mammon, Azazel, &c) are derived from the Hebrew, many scholars persist in deriving the name Mephistopheles from some Greek words meaning "not loving light." Actually, the name is of Hebrew derivation. What is the Hebrew source of the name Mephistopheles? (20)

4. What King was persuaded to whisper "peacock"? (30)

5. What is the meaning of this saying commonly used by pre-Shakespearean writers: "When bale is highest, boot is highest"? (10) What is its country of origin? (5)

6. Who was the "Carpathian Wizard"? (15)

7. What invention of John Pell (1611-1685) is still in use, unchanged, in primary and secondary schools? (10)

8. Should you eat the manna of St. Nicholas of Bari, yes or no? (5) Give two reasons for your answer. (10 each)

9. What is the other, and more common, name of the P'hansigars? (10)

10. The meaning of each of the following phrases may be expressed on one word (5 each, total 20):

- a. At the Latter Lammas
- b. On the Greek Calends
- c. In the Reign of Queen Dick
- d. On St. Tib's Eve

11. Name the Nine Worthies. (2 each; 20 for all 9).

12. Who was "Corporal Violet"? (15)

CDO

Canadian
Diplomacy
Organization

CDO is a group of affiliated Gamesmasters and publishers offering the following services to the Canadian hobby:

Complimentary Novice Packet yours for writing us at: P.O. Box 642, Sta. Q, Toronto, Ontario M4P 2M9.

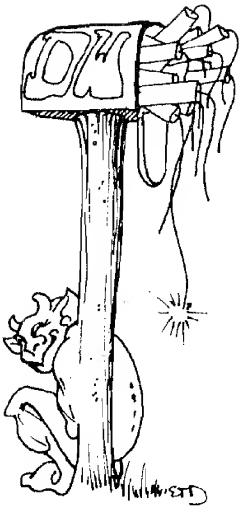
Census for an SASE from: Randolph Smyth, 249 First Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 2G5.

Ombudsman: John Leeder, 1211 5th St. N.W., Calgary, Alberta T2M 3B6.

Novice GM Assistance: Cal White, 1 Turnberry Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M6N 1P6.

Variant Information: James Hymas, 250 Glen Manor Drive W., Toronto, Ontario M4E 2Y1.

Orphan Games, other enquiries to our Director Doug Ronson, 864 Ingersoll Court, Mississauga, Ontario L5J 2S1.



THE MAILBOX FILLETH

Editor,

Thanks for putting my complaint in DW 18. I am happy to say I have now found a game by mail in The Ninth Circle. I can now see from reading your article in "The Novice Corner" that part of the fault was my own. I only wrote one publisher at a time. Your article was excellent and should help other people who were as frustrated as I was.

Russ Vandercook

((Glad you finally found a game. Maybe the problem was partially your fault, but only because nobody ever bothered to tell you what was needed. And the trouble will be that, even if my article helped a lot of people, in three or four issues DW will have lots more new subscribers who won't have seen it, and then we have to do it all over. I sincerely hope the IDA novice handbook - see elsewhere this issue - comes out soon. Incidentally, IDA people, if you want to reprint anything from "The Novice Corner," go ahead.))

Editor,

I think I preferred Issue 17 to the others because most of the contributions came from this side of the Atlantic puddle. Maybe your U.S. subbers found the opposite.

The biggest trouble with the American hobby is that it takes itself far too seriously. But perhaps this is just your nature. Someone who writes a 400-page book on Diplomacy must be

really far gone! ((Agreed - Editor)) The best way for DW to improve would be to start undermining the dreadful seriousness of Diplomacy in the States.

Iain Forsyth
Ayrshire, Scotland

((That's what all you bloody Kingdom types keep telling me! So if it's too deadly serious for you, why not write something to fix it - I have, after all, which is why "Allan B. Calhamer is a Phallic Symbol" may live in this issue up beyond belief. You may not like it, but at least it isn't serious.))

Editor,

As long as I've got the heavy boots on, a swift kick in the ass to the Editor of DW seems to be in order for the woeful lack of editing. Even setting aside differences of opinion, Adam Gruen's article on Italy (DW 18) is disorganized and trivialized. For example, in addition to other confusions set forth in my own article this issue, Plan Milan is discussed in Col. 2 of Page 30, but also (without using the label) in the third paragraph of "Theme 2." Or look at that table on Page 31. The last three lines tell you that if you're under attack by France, Austria or France/Austria, you should not ally with the attacker, but you should ally with



everyone else on the board. Real useful advice, huh? The "Plan Turin" item on Page 31 isn't even based on the "Plan Turin" opening moves, but on the missing "Western Lepanto" Spring 1901 moves. The same moves discussed in Col. 1 of Page 30 as "delayed stab" are discussed on Page 31 as "Plan Albania." The alert reader can probably find more. Where was the blue pencil when all this was happening? If you don't believe in editing for content, perhaps this letter and my article will change your mind.

Mark L. Berch

((No, you haven't changed my mind. I do edit for grammar, content, space, obscenity, libel, and all sorts of other things, but (in the case of content) I can only do so when I know what I'm doing. Now I freely admit that a lot of what you point out in Gruen's article should have been fixed; but I am no tactician, and - except for such stuff as which province borders which - I know virtually nothing about tactics. Yes, Mark, I know I have been active in this hobby for thirteen years. I still know little about tactics. That's because I was never interested in the subject, thus never paid any attention to it. In perfect honesty, the only tactical articles I've ever read are those I've typed for DW, and then only while typing - which means I have never read Edi Birsan's Lepanto article, or any of the other classics. I did once write a tactical article, though; the one in which I invented convoyed support.

((So - I do edit for content when I know the subject being edited. Ask Rod Walker or Bob Sacks or Lew Pulsipher about this. But because I felt unqualified to edit Adam's bit, I made no effort to do so.

((The best answer of all, of course, is to get writers who know what they're doing in the first place. Welcome to the staff, Mark. How about double-spacing from now on?))

Editor,

Why was Flying Buffalo dropped from the listings of "Need a Game?" We do still have game openings. We just recently started two more games. In addition, we have finally completed our Diplomacy computer program which is written in BASIC for a Poly 88 micro-computer with a North Star Disc drive. Since it is in BASIC, it is easily adaptable to other computers. We are planning to sell copies of this program for some reasonable price (probably around \$20) which will include a "guarantee" (i.e. if we find errors in the program, we will send corrections). Interested people should write us about it and we will let them know when we have the documentations in proper order. I know a lot of people have tried to write a program to the adjudications for Diplomacy - I

haven't heard of anyone else who has successfully done so yet. We have avoided some of the convoying paradoxes by requiring the player to write his convoy route. (A Lon via Eng to Bre.)

Rick Loomis
Flying Buffalo, Inc.
P.O. Box 1467
Scottsdale, AZ 85252

((Okay, you're back in the "Need a Game" list, for one issue. After now, there won't be one any more, of course....you were dropped because we were informed that you no longer had openings. We should have checked. We apologize. "We" means Conrad.

((There is, or was - presumably "is," since he's a packrat - at least one other computer program for Diplomacy adjudications. It was developed ten or eleven years ago by Dan Alderson of Los Angeles. It was never, so far as I am aware, used except in test situations. Which means that Dan devised the first program in the same sense that Leif Erikson discovered America.))

Editor,

Small World Diplomacy ((cf. DW 18, p.20)) has a nice design generally, but is badly balanced, especially in the 8-player form. Imbalance is not necessarily a fault, as anyone interested in horseracing knows. You burden mighty Nejd with 165 lbs., and poor Boob with only 110, just to make it interesting. I saw that the eighth power, Sea Empire, would be the most difficult, but volunteered for it and got it. Before Spring 1901 orders time I knew I had a basket case. I'd put in more diplomatic effort than any other three combined, but still looked like a sitting duck, and was so treated (I hope to survive as a China satellite). In mid-1901, Davis revised the map a little, but it is clear to me that three more revisions are necessary: Division of the North and South Pacific into east and west halves; allowing all Sea Empire's starting fleets to start in home-adjacent seas, unprejudiced; and make Italy a neutral center so Europe won't be so weak and hungry that it has to be a Russian puppet to survive. Islam is also in a pinch, and needs a Sahara buffer vs. Africa, and/or a north-south division of Caucasus to bar Russia in 1901. But note that standard Dip's unrealistic capture of big provinces by mere fleets is aggravated threefold in Small World. Davis' piggyback convoy rules make fleets supervalued anyway, so versus supply centers and armies I'd allow them only half strength, or maybe two-thirds.

In Garvey's comments on The Great Years he calls Mordor unstoppable. But let's grant the forces of evil are essentially stupid, so always give Mordor to the weakest-rated player. Still, the rest might be forced to a lot more cooperation than they would like. But that's

the fact of world history and the future; if all men of good will don't ally and learn to cooperate, then evil does win.

Any variant can much better afford an extra-strong power than an extra-weak one. It's usually easy to rally an alliance versus a menace, but hard to restrain the wolf-pack from devouring a sheep among them.

Curtis L. Gibson

Editor,

The percentage of DW readers who enjoy the variant section has decreased (if it actually has) because of ignorance. The new subbers don't know what the hell variants are, not really, and in DW they've lately got precious few good examples of variants they can play face to face. The latest issue is the worst. What damn good is it to talk about variants to people who have few or none? Yet there's not one variant rule in the latest issue, though you have at least three standard-board variants on hand. Sacks' column gives very little information useful to the average fan (such as, where to get variants, where to play by mail), and I have to waste space counteracting some of the stupid things he says. As I've said to Der, his column takes far too much space per variant, and does precious little good unless he reviews variants currently available, and says exactly where to send for them (and even then, few people will send for one, as I know from my own DW "review" experience).

Then when you do decide to print a variant, it's one so bloody big it isn't really practical for face-to-face play, and one which radically changes just those foundations of the rules that new subbers won't want changed. (I'm talking about AZTIAN.) ((Which will appear next issue - Editor.)) What the readers need are simple face-to-face variants. On the other hand, I've got two new-board variants, winners of the Variant Design Competition, which meet specifications designed for DW. What fate do they meet now that there will be no new-board variants in DW? (I don't mind that the new-board variant every issue is dropped, though it won't be good for over-the-counter sales - the board was, when well done, the best looking part of each issue.) Don't you unnecessarily limit yourself and the section by saying new boards are completely out? Your tendency to overstate won't help your credibility.

Lewis Pulsipher

((All right, I won't unnecessarily limit myself. New boards will be printed as space permits. However, almost anything else is going to have precedence - including, among other things, the three regular-board items already on hand.

((I agree that much is missing from the variant section, and I want to see improvement.

Lists of postal openings were supposed to be there; where are they, guys? References to sources for variant materials would help too; without a North American Variant Bank, that may be difficult, but if someone could tell me the ordering and cost policies of Haas' World Bank, I could at the very least include that data each issue.

((But I simply cannot accept responsibility for the fact that people will not go to the trouble to order variants even when spoon-fed the information on source and price. That's just one of those things that the individual will have the option to decide himself; if he doesn't want to go to the trouble to write a letter, that's his business. The reason I consider Garvey's column so important is that one of the largest complaints about variants is that people don't know what they're getting until it's too late; Der takes the biggest edge off that problem. If we can now add postal openings lists and source references, and fill the bulk of the remaining space with regular-board rules and maybe the occasional new-board item, we ought to have a good section.

((You don't really have to counteract what Sacks writes, you know, nor does he have to counteract you. I would probably be well-advised to just start using my editorial discretion to chop out all of that bickering and counter-diatribes. It would certainly help if writers would avoid such necessity in advance. Then if something really has to be "counteracted," do it in the letter column.))

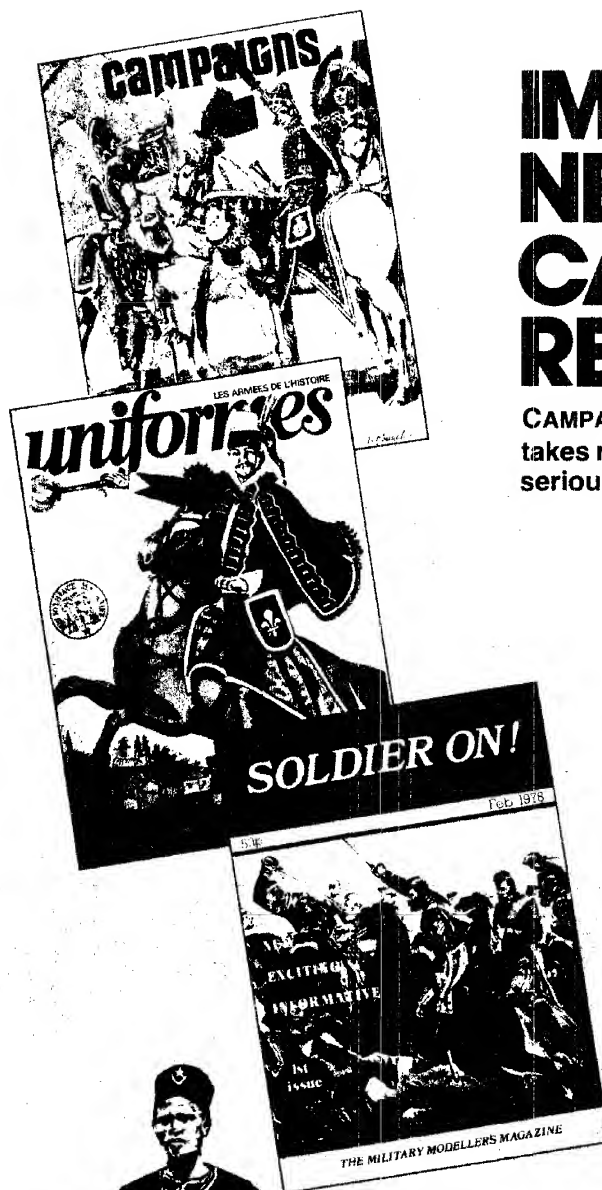


NEED A GAME?

The following is a list of all known publishers, arranged in chronological order according to length of time publishing, who regularly game openings in North America. Interested, send any of them a SSAE and a sample copy of their magazine; say you'll get an idea of which publishers most interest you. The bracketed number is the number of years each person has been "in business." An asterisk (*) indicates at least one break of 3 months or more during this period.

John Boardman, 234 E. 19th St., Brooklyn, New York 11226 (15)
 Al Naus, 1011 Barrett Ave., Chula Vista, California 92011 (11 1/2)
 John Van De Graaf, 37343 Glenbrook, Mt. Clemens, Michigan 48043 (6 1/4)
 Jim Benes, 417 S. Stough St., Hinsdale, Illinois 60521 (5 1/2)
 John Leeder, 1211 5th St. NW, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2M 3B6 (5 1/2)
 Ron Horton, 16 Jordan Ct., Sacramento, California 95826 (5 1/4)
 Robert Lipton, 556 Green Pl., Woodmere, New York 11598 (5)
 John Mirassou, Rt. 2, Box 623AC, Morgan Hill, California 95037 (4 1/2*)
 Jim Bumpas, 948 Loraine Ave., Los Altos, California 94022 (4 1/4)
 Lying Buffalo Inc., P.O. Box 1467, Scottsdale, Arizona 85252 (4)
 Bill Neiger, Box 4293, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island 02912 (4)
 Dave Kadlecek, 833 Loring Ave., Crockett, California 94525 (3 1/2)
 Randolph Smyth, 249 First Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1S 2G5 (4 1/2)
 Mike Kershaw, 238 N. Bowling Green Way, Los Angeles, California 90049 (3 1/2)
 Bob Hartwig, 5030 N. 109th St., Longmont, Colorado 80501 (3 1/2)
 Tony Watson, 201 Minnesota, Las Vegas, Nevada 89107 (3 1/2)
 Larry Fong, P.O. Box 11090, Oakland, California 94611 (3 1/2)
 David Head, Box 1231, Huntsville, Ontario, Canada P0A 1K0 (3 1/2)
 Greg Costikyan, P.O. Box 865, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island 02912 (3 1/2)
 Roger Oliver, P.O. Box 452, Denville, New Jersey 07834 (3)
 Robert Goldman, 200 Old Army Rd., Scarsdale, New York 10583 (2 1/2)
 Robert Sergeant, 3242 Lupine Dr., Indianapolis, Indiana 46224 (2 1/4)
 W. Elmer Hinton Jr., 20 Almont St., Nashua, New Hampshire 03060 (1 1/2)
 Bob Beardsley, 17 Moryan Rd., Edison, New Jersey 08817 (1 1/2)
 James Peters, 5004 N. 68th Dr., Glendale, Arizona 85303 (1 1/4)
 Steve Heinowski, 1630 W. 28th St., Lorain, Ohio 44052 (1)
 Robert Markham, 38 Knollwood Dr., Bethel, Connecticut 06801 (1)
 George Parkanyi, 158B McArthur Ave. #1608, Vanier, Ontario, Canada K1L 8C9 (1)
 David Bunke, 5512 Julmar Dr., Cincinnati, Ohio 45238 (1)
 Andy Cook, 807 Crescent Dr., Alexandria, Virginia 22302 (1)
 Thomas Gould, 40 W. 77th St., New York, New York 10024 (1)
 Jerry Jones, 1854 Wagner St., Pasadena, California 91107 (1/2)
 John Brennick, 192 Curtis Ave., Stoughton, Massachusetts 02072 (1/2)
 John Michalski, 913 NE 6th St., Moore, Oklahoma 73160 (1/2)
 Raig Reges, 16 W 761 White Pines Rd., Bensenville, Illinois 60106 (1/2)
 Henry Kelley, 6721 6th Ave. NW, Seattle, Washington 98117 (1/2)
 L. Richard Jarvinen, 330 Madison, Astoria, Oregon 97103 (1/4)
 Roy Snyder, 1507 S. 1st St., Kirksville, Missouri 63501 (1/4)
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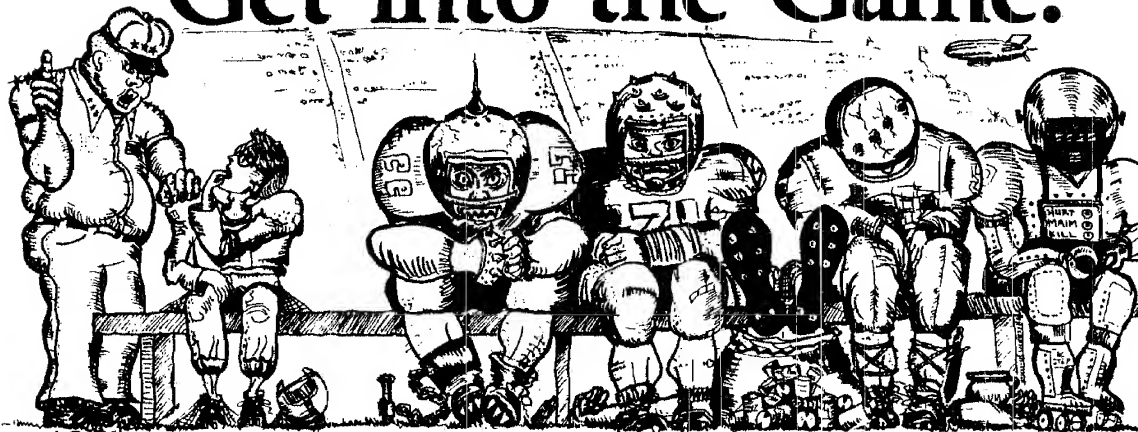
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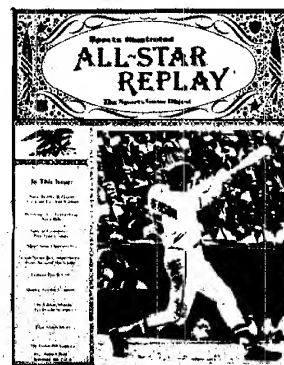
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